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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF JAPAN

BY

KATSURO HARA

YAMATO SOCIETY PUBLICATION

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OBJECTS OF THE YAMATO SOCIETY

The military achievements of Japan in the last twenty years have done much to make the world appreciate and acknowledge the intrinsic worth of the Japanese nation. It is, however, very doubtful whether the other nations find in us many other things to admire besides our military excellence. Some of them, indeed, without fully investigating their deeper causes, have entertained serious misgivings as to the probable consequence of our military successes. The continual occurrence of anti-Japanese movements in the various States of America and in the dependencies of Great Britain and Russia, countries with which Japan is most intimately connected, has been chiefly due to this want of knowledge as to the real state of affairs in Japan, the progress in the arts of peace, in science, literature, art, law and economics.

Japan has a brilliant civilisation of which we can justly be proud. In fine art, we have painting, sculpture, architecture, lacquer-work, metal-carving, ceramics, etc.,—all of striking quality; in literature, our poetry, fiction and drama are worthy of serious study; in music and on the stage our progress has been along lines which accord with

the development of our distinctive national character, and is by no means behind that of Europe.

Europeans and Americans, however, have failed as yet to appreciate the essential worth of Japan's civilisation. Some foreigners, it is true, speak highly of Japanese fine art, praising Japan as a country devoted to art; but the works that they admire are not always essentially characteristic of Japan, nor are they representative works of Japanese fine arts. The number of foreigners aware of the existence of an influential literature in Japan is extremely limited.

For such regrettable ignorance, however, we can blame no one but ourselves; for we have made very little effort to promote the appreciation of our civilisation by other peoples. If Japan, in her eagerness to learn the best of European civilisation, continues to disregard the necessity of making known her own civilisation to peoples abroad, the world's misconception of Japan will forever remain undispelled. It is our duty, indeed, to demonstrate to the world the fact that Japanese literature and art have foundations not less deep than those of our Bushido.

On the other hand, we must have the broadness of mind to recognise and correct our faults, so that we may make ours a civilisation that will compel the admiration of the world. Whether or not European civilisation, which we have to some extent adopted, is really good for the wholesome development of our nation is a question

which still awaits our mature consideration. In order to enjoy unrestricted the future possibilities of the world, we must look at things not only from a national, but also, from a world-wide point of view, abandoning the present Far Eastern exclusiveness and endeavouring to improve our position in the family of nations not by military achievements but by pacific means. This is, indeed, the surest way to make Japan one of the First Powers both in name and in reality.

To accomplish the above purpose is no doubt a task of no small magnitude and one which will require a great deal of time and labour; but as our conviction is that we should not hesitate because of difficulties, so we have undertaken the organisation of this Society to help towards the attainment of this ideal.

RULES OF THE YAMATO SOCIETY

ART. I. The Society has for its object to make clear the meaning and extent of Japanese culture in order to reveal the fundamental character of the nation to the world; and also the introduction of the best literature and art of foreign countries to Japan so that a common understanding of Eastern and Western thought may be promoted.

ART. II. In order to accomplish the object stated in the foreging Article the Society shall carry on the following enterprises:

1. Publication in foreign languages of works relating to various branches of Japanese history.
2. Translation of Japanese literary works.
3. Publication in foreign languages of works of Japanese literature and art.
4. Publication in foreign languages of a periodical relating to Japanese literature and art.
5. Such steps as may be necessary for the introduction into Japan of the best literature and art of foreign countries.
6. Exchange exhibitions of foreign and Japanese art objects to be arranged between Japan and other countries.
7. Investigation and application of means necessary for the maintenance and improvement of Japanese art.

8. Despatch to foreign countries of qualified persons for the study and investigation of important matters relating to or arising out of the purposes of the Society.

9. Investigation and application of means necessary for the improvement of the customs and ideals of the Japanese people in general.

ART. III. A Standing Committee shall be elected by the members.

ART. IV. The Standing Committee shall have power to appoint or dismiss a Secretary and clerks.

ART. V. Candidates for membership of the Society shall be recommended by the Society.

ART. VI. The expenses of the Society shall be defrayed out of the revenue derived from the contributions of members and of persons interested in the work of the Society, from the sale of publications and from other miscellaneous sources.

ART. VII. Meetings of the Society shall be held as occasion may require.

ART. VIII. The Standing Committee of the Society shall submit to the members once a year an annual report of the revenue and expenditures, accomplishments, and condition of the Society.

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PREFACE

The principal aim of this work, written at the request of the Yamato Society as the first of its projected series of publications, is to furnish a synopsis, or perhaps rather to give a general sketch, of the history of Japan. The public to which it is tendered is not those professional historians and students of history now abounding in our country, who are already perplexedly encumbered with, and engrossed by, a superfluity of overdetailed materials and a plethora of contradictory conjectures and hypotheses. In short, the book is, strictly speaking, intended for those Europeans and Americans who would like to dip into the past, as well as peer into the future, of Japan, —Japan, not as a land of quaint curios and picturesque paradoxes only worthy to be preserved intact for a show, but as a land inhabited by a nation striving hard to improve itself, and to take a share, however humble, in the common progress of the civilisation of the world.

Having such an aim on the one hand, it becomes on the other a matter of urgent necessity for the author to exercise great caution against extolling bombastically our national merits or falling into a coarse and futile jingoism. To be

ostentatious proves, after all, some lack of sincerity and impartiality, and is the very vice which should be avoided by historians worthy of the name. In order to guard against such a blunder, however, and attain as far as possible the aim I have set before me, I thought it wisest to approximate the standpoint from which the book was to be written as nearly as possible to that of a foreigner, free from our national prejudices and at the same time intensely sympathetic with our country. Of course, it can hardly be disputed that to place oneself unerringly on the standpoint of another, different widely in thought as well as in nationality, is an affair very easy to talk of, but exceedingly difficult to put into practice. I dare not presume that I have been at all equal to the task. Still it may be of some use for the reader to learn beforehand whither my earnest efforts are directed.

There is some truth in the saying that the time is not yet ripe for a conscientious Japanese scholar to write a history of our country covering all ages, ancient and modern, especially if that history is to be canvassed in a small volume of some three or four hundred pages. The reason generally alleged is that too many important questions in the history of Japan remain yet undecided. It is to be doubted, however, whether there can be found any country in the whole world whose historical problems are all definitely solved. Therefore it would be folly to wait till the Yellow River be-

comes pellucid, as a Chinese proverb has it. Since the opening of our country, we have had many foreign scholars investigating ourselves, our origins and our history, which in most cases have been misunderstood and misrepresented. By some we are overestimated, flattered, caressed, and cajoled. By others we are undervalued, despised, and condemned. We are sometimes elevated to a rank so high that no earthly nation could ever deserve it, and sometimes we are mercilessly relegated to a stage of savagery, to get back to which we should have to forego our cherished long history, the beginnings of which are lost in the myths of ages. Such an astonishing oscillation of opinion as regards the estimation of the merits and demerits of the Japanese nation and its history is more than to be endured. Surely the cause of being undervalued at one time lies in being overestimated at another, and vice versa. We must put an end to this oscillation and must be fairly represented, and in order to avoid misrepresentation we must portray ourselves as fairly as we can. We ought not to wait for the appearance of foreign authors, capable, unprejudiced, and deeply interested in our country.

It seems that there are not a few foreign publicists who suppose that Japan is not yet sufficiently advanced in her civilisation to require long years of study to understand her. This is why there is such a number of tourist-writers, who skip over the whole country in a few weeks,

and are presuming enough to make sweeping assertions about all sorts and conditions of things Japanese with which they come into touch at haphazard. Again, there is another class of writers, who would like to rate the Japanese nation and its history much higher than the above-mentioned do, and who know that it is not such a very easy matter to understand them. Unluckily, however, they are generally of the opinion that it is only they, and not the Japanese, who are competent to take up the task of interpretation, if those things are to be understood at all. Standing upon this point of view, they would gladly accept any kind of materials furnished by the Japanese, but flatly refuse to listen to any theories or arguments devised by Japanese scholars, and systematically repudiate almost all conclusions arrived at by the latter. Writers of such a type think that the intellectual capacity of the Japanese as a nation is not yet so high as to be able to elaborate logical argumentations. These two sets of foreign writers mentioned above sometimes praise us *sans phrase*, it is true. They are not, however, with their eulogistic and gracious verdict, the sort of champions to dispel the misrepresentations and misunderstandings under which we suffer.

Moreover, for Japanese historians, the need has never been more urgent than now to make a trial in writing a history of their own country for the sake of foreign readers. On account of the Great War, the so-called European Concert,

that is to say, the Areopagus of a few nations, will be superseded by the Concert of the World. The post-bellum readjustment and reconstruction, national as well as international, of countries belligerent and neutral will be an overwhelming task such as the nations of the world have never before undertaken. Perhaps there will follow a long period of peace, but the feeling of nations toward one another will in all natural probability continue sensitive and acute, and will not easily subside. And in such a nervous and critical age as that, Japan's position will be an exceedingly difficult one. Hitherto every move she has made, every feat she has achieved, has been made an object of international suspicion, especially in recent times. Japan, however, cannot help making progress in the future, whether welcomed by other nations or not, for where there is no progress, there is stagnation. Hence arises the imperative necessity, at the juncture, of an attempt by the Japanese to explain themselves through telling their own history, and by so doing procure thorough understanding of themselves, their character and characteristics, not only as they now really are, but as they used to be in the past. That is the one object which I have pursued in this volume.

In preparing this work I acknowledge that I am greatly indebted to my colleagues in our University of Kyoto. Warmest thanks are due to Professor A. H. Sayce of Oxford, who, during

his sojourn in our ancient metropolis, kindly revised that part of my manuscript dealing with the early history of Japan. It is also my greatest pleasure to acknowledge my gratitude to Mr. Edward Clarke, B.A. (Cantab.), Professor of English Language and Literature in this College, who went to a great deal of trouble in revising my awkward English through the whole volume.

KATSURO HARA

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October, 1918.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF JAPAN

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

THE history of Japan may be useful to foreigners in several different ways. If we do not take into account the serviceableness of detached historical data or groups of data, that is to say, when we exclude those cases where the historical data of Japan are studied not for the sake of understanding Japan herself, but in behalf of some other scientific purposes, then it can be said that Japanese history will serve foreigners in two principal and distinct ways. Firstly, it will interest them as the history of one special nation among many in the world. Secondly, it may be useful to historical study in general, seeing that it can be regarded as constituting in itself a microcosm of miniature of the history of the world manifested in that of a small nation. The former point is that which attracts most foreigners by the strength of novelty, while the latter will be none the less suggestive to comprehensive and

reflective historians. Both points need some explanations. Let me begin with the first.

Japan is a country inhabited by a people differing remarkably in racial features from those who now occupy the greater part of Europe. She remained for a long time shut up against the foreigners knocking at her gate, and on that account her history, compared with that of other nations, presents striking and unique characteristics. Many ancient manners and customs, some of them having their origins in ages prehistoric and unintelligible even to the present Japanese themselves, are handed down almost unchanged to this day. On the other hand, the history of Japan is not so simple as the histories of many semi-civilised countries, which are generally nothing but incredible legends and records of chronic disturbances arising out of some inevitable natural causes. Full of charming oddities, which might provide sources of wild speculations, and at the same time not lacking a certain complexity,—a complexity indispensable if it is to become an object of interest and investigation to any scientific historian, the history of Japan should prove a very fascinating study. In this it resembles the relation many rare indigenous flora and fauna bear to foreign biologists. It should be noticed, however, that biologists may safely remain constant as regards their points of view, whatever plant or animal they happen to study, while historians ought always to bear in mind that every nation and every

age has its own criterion. In the study of Japanese history the same truth must hold good. It is a very regrettable fact, however, that many foreign Japanologists are too fond of neglecting the Japanese point of view, and would like to apply the western standard to the things Japanese they encounter in their researches concerning our country. Frequently they are rash enough to criticise before they have a proper understanding of those things which it is their business to criticise. Sometimes they get at a truth to which Japanese scholars have never attained, but they almost as a rule forget that things Japanese too should be considered from many sides, as occidental things should necessarily be, and inflexibly adhere to that one line of insight which they were once fortunate enough to seize. Or sometimes they attack pitilessly those legendary parts of our history, which are to be found in some school text-books or are not yet entirely expunged from some more scholarly works, on account of a national reluctance to part with those cherished memories of our forefathers. They blame us as if no country in the world were chauvinistic except Japan, and Japan only. Such treatment of Japanese history, however, will avail them nothing at all, not to mention that we suffer very much in our outward relations from it. As chapter II. and the following, however, are chiefly devoted to the purpose of showing that the history of Japan may be interpreted side by side with that of many

European nations, I will cease dwelling further on this topic, and will directly go over to the second point.

To consider Japanese history as a miniature of the world's history is rather a new assertion, so that it requires conclusive justification. It is now generally believed or assumed that every nation continues to evolve as an individual does, till it reaches its climax of growth and begins to decay. Hence many modern historians have successively tried to extract certain principles by the process of induction from kindred historical events which took place in different countries and ages, and thus to raise the study of history to the rank of a science in the same sense as that in which the word is used when we speak of natural phenomena. It is a great pity, however, that every historical event is of a very ephemeral nature, never to be repeated in exactly the same form in which it once occurred. And if it passes away, it passes away forever, not to be retarded in the midst of its course by the will of an investigator. Often one can contribute with full consciousness to the happening of an event, or can alter the course of it, but one cannot undo by any means the event itself and wash the ground as if nothing had taken place. Moreover, historical facts are very difficult to detach from their environment entirely, however isolated they seem to be, and on that account they are not fit to be made objects of laboratory experiments. In a school class-

room the pupils are taught to solve an algebraic equation of a binomial expression by supposing the value of x and y alternately to be equal to zero. How much the task of historians would be lightened, if we could for some time trace the effect of a certain cause exclusively, setting at naught other concurrent causes, as if those causes might be supposed to be standing still for a moment of observation or hypothetically cancelled for a necessary time!

Strictly speaking, the above device is out of the question in the case of any historical investigation. Setting that aside, there is still another greater difficulty to encounter in the study of history. Every school-boy knows that there is a fundamental law in physics, that when a body is set in motion by a certain impetus, it will move on continuously in one direction with the same momentum, so long as it is left uninfluenced by any other new force. It is true, however, that such a case exists very rarely even in natural phenomena, and it would be quite absurd to look for the like in the domain of history. More than one cause acts conjointly upon individuals, families, tribes, or nations, and before those causes cease to influence, other new causes generally come into play, so that the influences of the latter are interwoven with those of the former causes or groups of causes, and make discrimination between them exceedingly difficult.

Summing up the above, one cannot entirely

isolate a country from its surroundings, in order to see what a country or a nation would be able to achieve, if untouched by any outward influence, that is to say, solely out of its own immanent evolving forces. Next, it is none the less difficult to observe scientifically the effects of some outward forces acting on a nation, by warding off the influx of subsequent influences and thus giving to the forces in question the full scope and time to exert their influence. It often happens, however, that what cannot be done artificially may be found produced spontaneously, and though we cannot make experiments, in the strict sense of the word, while observing historical data, it is possible that the history of a nation or of an age may be taken as a case or a phase of an experiment, if such an experiment could ever be tried at all. And indeed the history of Japan may be considered as one of a few such happy cases.

Here I need not talk much about the history of our country anterior to the introduction of the Chinese civilisation. After the opening of the regular intercourse between this country and China in the beginning of the seventh century, institutions, arts, learning, and even the manners of every day life continued for a long time to be brought thence by many official emissaries and students, and copied faithfully here, though generally with slight modifications. At that time, however, there being no country far advanced in civilisation other than China near us, the Chinese

influence, the only exotic one, was allowed to take sole and full effect. Besides this, that Chinese civilisation itself was not encouraged to flow in endlessly. When, with the decay of the T'ang dynasty and the setting in of the anarchical condition following it in China, the highly finished culture attained during that dynasty, perhaps the most perfect one China had ever seen, began to degenerate there, the official intercourse between that country and Japan was interrupted. Of course, I do not mean to say that even private and intermittent commercial intercourse was also suspended at the same time, for the geographical position of our country toward China does not allow the former to remain entirely isolated from the latter. The suspension of the regular intercourse itself, however, was enough to save Japan from becoming entangled in the vicissitudes of the various dynasties following the T'ang, and our forefathers were left to themselves to make the best use of, that is to say, to digest, what had already been brought in abundantly. In the succeeding period the quiet process of rumination went on for several centuries. If we look back into the Japanese history of that time, therefore, we can ascertain fairly scientifically the effect of a high civilisation acting on a naïve population not yet sufficiently organised as a nation, as our country was at that period, and likewise we can observe many traits of the old T'ang culture, which is now

difficult to trace in China herself. This is our first experiment in Chinese civilisation.

Among the dynasties that followed the fall of the T'ang, that which longest held the rule was the Sung, and between China under the latter dynasty and Japan merchant ships plied now and then. Some Japanese Buddhist priests followed the track of their predecessors, and went over to China to study Buddhism. At the time of the Yuen dynasty founded by the Mongols, China sent many Buddhist missionaries successively to Japan, where religious innovations were in course of progress. This is our second experiment in Chinese civilisation. In the first experiment the religious element was of course not excluded. The essential characteristic, however, of the culture of the T'ang dynasty was politico-æsthetical, and as the result of the introduction of that culture, Japan became enlightened in general. In other words, the first experiment may be said to have been an æsthetical one, while the second is one apt to be termed a religious one, and by the blending of the results of the two experiments, we became a tolerably æsthetic and religious people. Still there remained much to be wished for in respect of national unification and social solidarity, and it is the culture of the Sung dynasty itself which provided that very need, being politico-ethical in its essential nature. By the introduction of that culture the doctrines of the Confucian philosophers, which were made the means of regulating

the social and political organisation of Japan, were inculcated widely and deeply, and forced into practice more rigorously than they were in China herself. This is our third experiment in Chinese civilisation. And when this experiment was almost finished, we were faced by the inundation of western civilisation, which at last made it impossible for us to continue the process of rumination, and compelled us to plunge headlong into the maelstrom of world history.

It is rather derogatory to our national pride to have to aver that we are so deeply indebted to Chinese civilisation. Yet the facts cannot be denied, nor the truth falsified. Moreover, we need not be ashamed that we brought in so much from China, while we gave very little to the Chinese in exchange. How could we, who were very late in commencing a civilised national life, initiate a new civilisation independent of that of China, without imitating it? Was not the Chinese civilisation too far advanced and too overpowering for the Japanese of that time, the Japanese who were still at the outset of their evolutionary march? On the contrary, justice should be done to the fact, that we not only improved ourselves by availing ourselves of such a high civilisation, but withstood it at the same time, being far from dwindling away as a result of having come into contact with it, as many uncivilised races have done in a similar case. No impartial historian would fail to observe that there is some capacity

not borrowed but inborn in the Japanese people, by force of which they were able to consolidate themselves as a compact nation, possessing striking characteristics quite different from those of China. And it is especially to be noted to the honour of the Japanese, that the more we helped ourselves to Chinese culture, the wider became the divergence between the two countries. Could such a way of introducing an alien civilisation be designated a servile imitation? I am far from trying to embellish every phase of the history of Japan, whatever its due merit may be, and would be content if even a few of the wanton calumnies current vis à vis Japan be set aright by making her real history understood, which is not very easy to grasp, but yet not so sterile as it is reputed to be by some foreign historians.

What I want to call attention to next is that the history of our country is not that monotonous repetition of a certain kind of historical data, however peculiar the data in themselves may be. Nay, the history of Japan is full of varieties in the nature of its data. The history of Greece is sometimes stated to be a miniature of the world's history on account of the richness in variety of the historical phenomena which occurred there, it being possible to find there also most of the important subjects treated in history at large, though of course on a much reduced scale. In this regard, too, the history of Japan closely resembles that of ancient Greece. Our country had been

disunited for a long time, each section constituting itself a political quasi-unit governed by a certain local semi-independent lord, like the tyrant of Greek history. Those local potentates, however, were not so arrogant as not to recognise the hereditary, political and spiritual sovereignty of the Emperor. Not only that. They also reluctantly rejected the hegemony of the Shogunate, though as a matter of fact this had but a nominal existence. From this point of view, it might be asserted that our country never ceased to be a united one. The bond of unity, however, became very slack at intervals, so that the very existence of the unity itself was often in doubt. In our history, therefore, there were many obstacles to progress, especially in those lines of progress which necessarily depend on the close unification of the whole country. At the same time, however, advantages are not to be neglected, which might be considered to result from the dismemberment itself. Japan had many small centres at some periods. But it was, to some extent, owing to similar circumstances that those centres came into existence, and for that reason there was to be found much in common in all of them, in respect of the tone of the culture fostered in the respective centres. That is a matter of course. Among those centres, however, there arose naturally much vying with one another in the promotion of their progress, and thus the general standard of civilisation in Japan came to be raised to a not

inconsiderable height. Moreover, something like international relations began to grow up between those units, which contributed largely to the perfection of the culture within each of them. This is the same interesting phenomenon, which we can trace not in the history of Greece only, but in that of the Holy Roman Empire, nay, even in the history of Europe itself. The difference is simply that in Europe the same phenomenon developed on a grand scale, while it took place in Japan in a very small compass. No wonder that as a result of having had a national experience of the nature stated above, the history of Japan is rich in varieties of data and deserves the attention of highly qualified historians. So let me here submit to a hasty examination a few of the important items in Japanese history, which even to European readers, may be of no small interest, having their parallels in the histories of the West.

The first and the most important item to be mentioned is feudalism. A famous living French historian once told me that it was absurd to speak of Japanese feudalism, since feudalism was a special historical phenomenon originated by the Franks, and therefore not to be found outside of Europe. How is the word "feudalism" rightly to be defined then? May it not be extended to a similar system which prevailed in western Europe, but not under Frankish authority? If it can be said that feudalism also obtained in the Swabian,

the Saxonian and the Marcomanian land, surely it would not be absurd to extend it a bit further so as to make it cover similar phenomena which arose in non-European countries, for example in China and especially in Japan. For centuries in Europe historians successively tried to solve the question, What is feudalism? A great number of hypotheses has been presented. Some of them held the ground against their antagonists in bitter scientific controversies, but were soon obliged to give way to clever newly-started theories, and no conclusive solution has yet been given to the problem. The cause of the failure chiefly lies in the mistaken idea, that feudalism is a kind of systematic legislation, which originated in the elaboration of some rules put together by some sagacious ruler, or in the time-honoured invention of some very gifted tribe, and starting from this erroneous supposition some scholars have believed that they would be able to generalise from those overwhelmingly chaotic materials, and thereby to establish certain fundamental principles applicable to the feudal relation of whichever country they chose. Far from their assumption being true, however, feudalism is not an invention of somebody, made consciously, nor a result of a deliberately devised enactment. A few general rules may be extracted perhaps by so-called generalising, but even these few would be provided with exceptional conditions. Therefore, the truth we reach at last by studying the historical sources concerning feudal-

ism is rather the general spirit pervading all kinds of feudalism, and not any concrete rule applicable everywhere, as we see in the case of natural sciences. If the granting of the usufruct of a certain extent of land in exchange for military service is the essence of feudalism, it is indisputable that feudalism existed in Japan too.

Feudalism is indeed a necessity, as a Chinese servant has said in a memorable essay. It is a necessity which any nation must undergo, if that nation is to become consolidated. Feudalism is often described as a backward movement with respect to the political organisation. Primitive races, however, cannot be described as having been either centralised or decentralised, socially and politically, and the first stage which they must pass is that of a vague centralisation. In this stage, superficially observed, it appears as if the race were centralised at one point, but the truth is that in so early a stage of civilisation, it is not probable that more than one prominent centre would at once be formed conspicuous enough to attract attention. And even that one centre itself is formed, not because it is strong enough to centralise, but because centripetalism actuates the environment, and no other force is yet so strong as to compete with it. In early times, however, the degree of prominency of a single centre over all others must have been very slight. As time passes, lesser centres begin to distinguish themselves, closely following the

prominent first in strength of centralisation, and become at last so powerful as to be able to challenge the hegemony of the first centre. This state of affairs we generally denote as the age of dismemberment, as if a true centralisation had been accomplished in the age preceding. This view is utterly false. Without the power to centralise, no political centre can be said to exist really, and without any strong centre effective centralisation is not possible. The apparent centralised, that is to say, unified condition of the ancient empires, is nothing but a chaotic condition with one bright point only, and the state of being seemingly dismembered is in truth a step toward the real unification, centralisation *in partibus* paving the way for centralisation on a larger scale. This phase in the preparatory process for the unity and consolidation of a nation is feudalism itself. Feudalism is a test through which every nation must pass, if it aspires to become a well organised body at all. There are some tribes, indeed, which have never passed through the feudal period in their history, but that is due to the fact that these tribes had certain defective traits which hindered them from undergoing that experience, and on account of that they have been unable to achieve a sound, well-proportioned progress in their civilisation, which must necessarily be accompanied by a well-organised political centralisation, whether it be monarchical or democratic. Other nations have passed, it is true, the test of the feudal régime,

but very imperfectly, and for that reason have had great difficulty in amending the defect afterwards.

By no means need we lament that we were under the feudal régime for a considerable time in our history. On the contrary, I am rejoiced that we were. Every political devolopment must go side by side with the corresponding social progress. The latter, unless sheltered by the former, lacks stability, while the former, if unaccompanied by the latter, is not tenable, and will break down before long and be of no avail. Feudalism can be compared to a nut-shell, which protects the kernel till it quietly consummates its maturing process within. Social progress, of whatever sort it be, ought to be covered by a political régime of a certain kind, especially adapted to discharge the task of protection, and must be allowed thereby to prosecute its own development free from disturbing influences. Feudalism is one of the political régimes indispensable to perform such a function. Though it seems to be fortunate for a nation not to tarry too long in the stage of feudalism, yet it is not desirable for the nation to emerge out of this stage prematurely.

To sum up, in order that a nation may continue in its healthy progress, it should have feudalism once in its historical course, and must pass that test fairly. And as passing a test can be fruitful only on condition that that test itself be fair, it becomes necessary as a natural consequence that

a fair test must be passed fairly. Then how is it with Japan? It cannot be safely said that we have passed the test exceedingly well, but at the same time we can presume that we have not passed it badly. If someone should say that the Japanese stayed unnecessarily long in that condition and have not even yet entirely emerged from it, he must have forgotten that even the most civilised countries of Europe could not shake off the shackles of the feudal system entirely until very recent times, the first half of the nineteenth century still retaining an easily perceptible tincture of it, as we see in the survival of the patrimonial jurisdiction in some continental states of Europe. On the other hand foreign observers generally fail to see that the régime of the Tokugawa Shogunate, which I shall expatiate upon in a later chapter, is of a sort quite different from that of the European feudalism in the middle ages, and are induced to believe that the Japanese nation has been quit of the miserable régime for only fifty years. These views are both totally mistaken. In our relation to feudalism, we went through almost the same experience as other civilised nations did, neither more nor less. Because, in so far as we speak of the history of any nation ranging from its beginning till our day, more than half of it can be held to have been occupied by feudalism, the history of Japan may also be said to have in common with other nations more than

half of the essential elements which the so-called history of the world could teach.

After having seen that our history is not totally unlike that of the nations of Europe in its most essential trait, it is not strange that the history of Japan should contain many other things, besides feudalism, which can be reckoned as the typical items necessary to make up the history of any civilised nation, that is to say, as the chief ingredients not to be dispensed with in the world's history,—viz., various religious movements keeping pace with the social development at large, economic evolution conditioning and conditioned by the changes of other factors constituting civilisation in general, etc. As the foreign influences can be traced comparatively distinctly, the history of Japan can, to a large extent, be subjected to a scientific analysis. So if we look for the history of a nation, which is fit to represent the gradual evolution of national progress in general, Japanese history must be a select one. It is in this respect that I said that the history of our country is a miniature of the world's history. After all the history of Japan is not so simple and naïve as to be either an easy topic for amateur historians, or a suitable theme for ordinary anthropologists, ethnographers, or philologists, who are not specially qualified to deal with histories of civilised times. Those whom I should heartily welcome as the investigators of the history of our country, are those historians in Europe and Amer-

ica, who, more than amply qualified to write the history of their own countries, have continued to disdain extending their field of investigation to the corners of the world, thought by them not civilised enough to be worthy of their labour. If they care to peep into the history of our country, perhaps the result will not be so barren as to disappoint them utterly. The greatest misfortune to our country at the present day is that her history has been written by very few first-rate historians of Europe and America, those who have written upon it being mostly of the second or third rank. Nay, there are many who cannot be called historians at all. The best qualifications they have are that, by some means or other, they can write a book, or that they were once residents of Japan, and if they venture to write a history about a country outside of their own, Japan seems to them to be the easiest subject, the greater part of their compatriots being quite ignorant of it.

I dwell thus long, however, on the significance of the history of Japan, not in order to silence these quasi-historians, nor forcibly to induce the first-rate foreign historian to study the history of Japan against his own will. The former attempt is useless, while the latter may be almost hopeless. The principal reason for having long dwelt on the subject, is only to have it understood by foreigners, that the Japanese nation, which has such an advanced historical experience in the past, is not to be considered as one only recently awak-

ened, and therefore to be admired, patted, encouraged, feared and despised in rapid succession. If once they happen to understand the true history of Japan, then the fluctuations in their estimation of us will also cease; then, perhaps, we shall not be feared, or rather, made an object of scare any more, as now we are, but at the same time we shall be happy not to be disliked or rejected.

CHAPTER II

THE RACES AND CLIMATE OF JAPAN

WHICH is the more potent factor in building up the edifice of civilisation, race or climate? This has been a riddle repeatedly presented to various scholars of various ages, and has not yet been completely solved. The immanent force of the race deeply rooted in the principle of heredity on the one hand, and the influence of the physical milieu on the other, have been, are, and will be, ever the two important factors, coöperating in engendering any sort of civilisation, yet are they not always friendly forces, but, in a sense, rivals, competing for the ascendency. Looking back into the history of the interminable controversy as to the position of the two, and taking into consideration the fact that they are not the only factors contributing to the progress of civilisation, it would perhaps seem to be a waste of labour to try anew to solve the question. If one should endeavour to explain the respective importance of the two factors, putting due stress on each at the same time, he would then be in danger of falling into a self-contradiction or of begging the question endlessly; otherwise he must be satisfied

with being the sermoniser of quite a commonplace truism! This is not, however, the place to enter into a discussion to determine the preponderant influence of either of the two, a discussion perhaps fruitful enough, but almost hopeless of arriving at a final solution. But as in recording the history of any country one should begin well at the beginning, I, too, cannot desist from starting with a description of the race and of the climate, with their relations to the history, of Japan.

Of these two factors, I need not say much about the first. It is about forty years since meteorological observations have been regularly and continuously made in this country and the results published in periodical reports, so that almost all requisite data pertaining to the climatology of Japan are at the disposal of the investigator. Assuming that the climate of Japan at present, which can be ascertained, not exhaustively perhaps, but scientifically enough, is not a widely different one from what it was in the past, there is the less need of dwelling upon the topic, so far as the scope of this book is concerned. I will content myself, therefore, with treating it very briefly.

Generally speaking, it must be admitted that the ideal climate for the progress of civilisation must not be either a very hot or a very cold one; in other words, it must be a temperate one. At the same time, it is necessarily true that, for the sake of fostering a civilisation, the climate should be

stimulative, that is to say, should be variable, but not running to such extremes as to impede the vital activity of the population. When a climate is constant and has no seasonal change, that climate, however mild it be, is very enervating, and not fitted for any strenuous human exertion, physical or mental, and is therefore adverse to the onward march of civilisation. Judged by this standard, the climate of Japan is a good one. If we put aside all the recently organised or annexed parts of the Empire, that is to say, Korea, Saghalen, Formosa, Loochoo, and Hokkaido, the remaining part, that is to say, the whole of historic Japan, which includes the three principal islands, was formerly divided into sixty-six *kuni* or provinces, and stretches over a wide range of latitude, extending from 31°—41.5° N., so that the difference in temperature at its two extremes is very considerable. It must be remembered, however, that the difference is not so great as to necessitate totally different modes of living. In the province of Satsuma, for instance, the falling of snow can often be witnessed, while in Mutsu the temperature, in the height of summer, frequently climbs above 90° F. The southern Japanese, therefore, can settle in the northern provinces quite comfortably without changing many of their accustomed habits, and the northerners, on the other hand, can shift their abode to the island of Kyushu, with very little modification in their ways of living. This almost similar way of living

throughout the whole of historic Japan, with very slight local modifications only, is the cause why the unity of the nation was accomplished comparatively easily.

As to the seasonal changes, they occur somewhat frequently in Japan, and impart a highly stimulative quality to her climate. According to the interesting investigation made by an American climatologist, for a climate to be stimulative it is necesasry that there should be not only marked seasonal changes, but also frequent variations within each of the seasons themselves, and it is nothing but the storms which induce such important daily climatic changes. If we may accept his conclusion, then Japan may rank fairly high among the countries with the best kind of climate. For not to speak of the seasonal changes so clearly definable, in Japan, the cyclonic storms, the main cause of the daily climatic changes, occur very frequently. It can be said that no one desires to have them occur more often on this account. After all, the climate of Japan would have been almost an ideal one, if there had been less rain in the early summer, the long rainy season being evidently the chief cause of the enervating dampness. By the way, it should be remarked that the dampness which is the weakest point of the climate of Japan, not only in the summer, but throughout the whole year, is in excess more in the regions bordering on the Sea of Japan than in those facing the Pacific Ocean and the Inland

Sea. This fact explains the historical phenomenon that the most momentous events in Japanese history have taken place not in the former but in the later regions. If we look into the history of Europe, the Inland Sea of Japan has its counterpart in the Mediterranean, the Pacific, in the Atlantic, and the Sea of Japan in the Baltic Sea. Perhaps the attentive traveller will notice that the same greyish hue of the sea-surface can be perceived in the Sea of Japan as in the Baltic Sea, and that very sombre colour imparts the same gloomy tone to the atmosphere of the regions bordering on those two seas. It is true that many mythical legends of our country have their scenes in the coastal regions along the Sea of Japan, the so-called "Back of Japan," and, moreover, in standard of civilisation, these regions, compared with the other parts of the Empire, decidedly do not rank low. That is due, however, not to the influence of the fair climate prevailing in those parts of Japan, but to the proximity of the Asiatic continent. For, as the result of that proximity, there must have been very intimate relations between those regions of Japan and the continental tribes on the opposite shore, some of whom are sometimes supposed to have had the same origin as the Japanese. At present the influence of the climatic drawback in those districts is very evident, and it will be in the distant future that the time will arrive when the "Back of Japan" will

become more thriving and enlightened than the other side of Japan facing the Pacific, unless there should be a sudden upheaval in the progress of the civilisation, and in the growth of prosperity, on the opposite continental shore.

Between northern and southern Japan, it is not very easy to distinguish what influence the climates of the two regions had on their history. It is certain that northern Japan is inferior to southern Japan in climatic conditions, if we consider the impediments put on human activity there, on account of the intense cold during the winter. It is doubtful, however, whether the backwardness of the North in the forward march of civilisation can be solely attributed to its climatic inferiority. Even in the depth of winter, the cold in the northern provinces of Hon-to cannot be said to be more unbearable and unfit for the strenuous activity of the inhabitants, than that of the Scandinavian countries or of northeastern Germany. The principal cause of the retardation of progress in northern Japan lies rather in the fact that it is a comparatively recently exploited part of the Empire. Since the beginning of historic times, the Japanese have pushed their settlements more and more toward the north, so that the population in those regions has grown denser and denser. If this process had continued with the same vigour until today, the northern provinces might have become far more populous, civilised, and prosperous, than we see them now.

Unfortunately for the North, however, just at the most critical time in its development, the attention of the nation was compelled to turn from inner colonisation to foreign relations. Besides, the subsequent acquisition of new dominions oversea made the nation still more indifferent to the exploitation of the less remunerative northern half of Hon-to. As to the climatic conditions of Hokkaido and Loochoo, it is needless to say that they are far different from that of the historic part of the Empire, and each of them needs special consideration. They have had, however, very little to do with the history of Japan. The same may also be said still more emphatically about Formosa, Saghalen, and Korea, though the influence of their climates on the destiny of future Japan will without doubt be immense; but as these regions do not come within the purview of my book, I can, without prejudice, omit further reference to them.

Together with the climate, the race stands forth as an indispensable factor in the promotion of its civilisation. Then to what race do the Japanese belong? Can all the people of Japan be homogeneously comprised under a single racial appellation, or must they be treated as an agglomeration of several different races? Are the Japanese, or the bulk at least of the Japanese, indigenous or immigrant? If the Japanese are an immigrant race, then whence did they originate, and what is the probable date of their immigration into this

country? What race, if not the Japanese, are the aborigines of these islands? Questions of this kind, and others of a similar nature have stood waiting for solution these many years! But none of them has yet been completely answered, though attempts have been made not only by a large number of native investigators, professional as well as amateur, but also by not a few foreign philologists and archæologists, who were tolerably well-versed in things Japanese. Recently many interesting excavations of ancient tombs and historical sites have been made, and various remains pertaining to the old inhabitants of the islands have been submitted to the speculative scrutiny of specialists. They have served, however, rather to lead one to deeper, more obstinate, scepticism, than to shed light on those doubtful and tentative answers and indecisive controversies. It is very much to be regretted that we have no authentic record of the early immigration into Japan from the pen of a contemporaneous writer, so that we could thereby verify the interpretations assigned to the remains found in the ancient tombs. This is to be attributed to the lack of the use of written characters among the aboriginal people, as well as to the illiteracy of the early immigrants. If we had as remains of prehistoric Japan such valuable historic materials as have been excavated in Europe and Western Asia, we should have been able to deduce the history of its early ages with a tolerable degree of certainty

from the remains themselves, independently of any documental evidence. Unfortunately, however, in this respect also, our prehistoric remains consist only of a few kinds of earthenware, mostly with very simple patterns on them, and some other kinds of primitive utensils of daily use, such as saddles, bridles, sword-blades, and the like. Huge tombstones are sometimes found, but they have no such inscriptions as we see on many Greek sarcophagi, being provided only with a few unintelligible, perhaps meaningless, scratches. As to the primitive Japanese ornaments, very few historical data can be gathered from them, for they are generally beads of very simple design, and of three or four different shapes. It is quite hopeless to think that we should ever be able to dig out a single dwelling, not to speak of a whole palace, village, or town, on any Japanese historical site, since no stone, brick or other durable material was ever used in the construction of buildings. As our stock of reliable, authentic information concerning our origins is so scanty, it is at the disposal of any one to manufacture whatever hypothesis he chooses, however wild a speculation it be, and sustain it as long as he likes against any antagonist, not by proving it positively and convincingly, but by pointing out the impossibility of the opposing hypothesis, so that the present state of archaeological research in Japan may be summed up as an intellectual skirmish carried on by regular as well as by irregular militant

scholars. Therefore, in spite of the fact that Japan now abounds in ethnologists, big and small, each fashioning some new hypothesis every day, there can be perceived only a very slow progress in the solution of the fundamental question, "Who are the Japanese?" We are almost at a loss to decide to which assertion we can most agreeably give our countenance with the least risk of receiving an immediate setback. So I shall be content to state here only those hypotheses, which may be considered comparatively safe, although they may not rise far above the level of conjecture.

The only thing virtually agreed to by all investigators engaged in ethnological inquiry concerning Japan, is that the Ainu is the aboriginal race, and that the Japanese so called belongs to a stock different from the Ainu. Once for a time there prevailed a hypothesis that there was a people settled in this country previous to the coming of the Ainu, who must be therefore an immigrant race. It is said that the Ainu called this people by the name of Koropokkuru. But very little indeed is known about these supposed autochthons, except that they were very small in stature, and that this pigmy race receded and vanished before the advancing Ainu. The theory had its foundation only in some Ainu legends, and was not supported by any archæological remains, which could be attributed, not to the Ainu, but to a special pigmy race only. Much reliance, therefore, could not be placed upon this hypothesis, or rather

vague suggestion, and it was speedily dropped. Still it is not yet decided whether the Ainu is the real autochthon in Japan or an immigrant from some quarter outside the Empire. Most of the Ainologists are rather inclined to the opinion that the Ainu himself is also an immigrant, though no other race prior to him had settled in Japan. But then there arises among scholars another disagreement, that about the original home of the race. Some hold the opinion that the Ainu came over to the Japanese islands from the north or the northwest, that is, from some coastal region of the Asiatic continent on the other side of the Sea of Japan. And there are not a few, too, who not only trace the origin of the race into the heart of Asia, but even go so far as to say that the Ainu came from the same cradle as the Caucasian race. Some go still further and localise the origin of the race more minutely, identifying the race as a branch of the protonordic race, akin to the modern Scandinavians. On the other hand there is a certain number of ethnologists, who entertain the opinion that the Ainu immigrated into Japan, from the south, and not from the north; but no specified locality in the south has yet been designated as the original home of the race. The last hypothesis seems, however, not to be untenable, when we consider that in historic times the Japanese drove the Ainu more and more northward, till the latter lost entirely its foothold in Hon-to, and was at last hemmed in within a small

area in the island of Hokkaido and the adjacent islets. From this fact it can be imagined with some probability that the same direction of expansion might have been taken by the Ainu also in prehistoric times. The custom of tattooing, also, which can be very seldom seen among the northern Asiatic tribes, suggests to us, though faintly, the possibility of the existence of a certain kind of affinity between the Ainu and the inhabitants of the tropical regions. On the other hand, if we turn our attention to the outward features of the Ainu race, and remember that races very much resembling the Ainu are still lingering on the northeastern shores of Asia, the immigration from the northwest becomes not utterly improbable. Even the supposition that the Ainu belongs to the Aryan stock cannot be rejected as quite a worthless speculation, if the paleness of the complexion, the shape of the skull, and some other characteristic features be taken into account. In short, the ethnological uncertainty regarding the Ainu race is, in all likelihood, one of the principal causes of the obscurity concerning Japanese race-origins. Sometime in the future, I have no doubt, the racial riddle concerning the Ainu will be cleared from the haze in which it is now shrouded. Here, however, especially as I am not now treating of ethnology, I will avoid forming any hasty conclusion, and leave the question as it stands.

Whether the Ainu be autochthonous or immi-

grant, and whatever be the original home of the race, if immigrant at all, the hairy people, it is true, once spread all over these islands, not in Hon-to only, but even to the southern end of the island of Kyushu. This can be proved by the pottery excavated in the provinces of Satsuma and Ohsumi, and also by several geographical names in Kyushu, the etymological origin of which may best be traced to an Ainu source. As a matter of fact, the Ainu had been gradually driven northward, and the island of Kyushu wrested from their hands, before the dawn of the historical age, leaving perhaps here and there patches of tribesmen, who were too brave or not speedy enough to flee before the advancing conquerors. And those remnants, too, after a faint survival of some generations, were at last subdued, exterminated, or swallowed up among the multitudes of the surrounding victorious race or races. Thus Shikoku, the island of the four provinces, and the southwestern part of Hon-to were evacuated by the Ainu before the end of the prehistoric age. When the curtain rises on Japanese history, we find the Ainu fighting hard against the Japanese in the north of Hon-to.

We have here designated the vanquishers of the Ainu, for the sake of convenience, simply by the name of Japanese. Were they the Japanese in the same sense as the word is understood by us now? Were the vanquishers a homogeneous people, or a heterogeneous one? If the Japanese

were heterogeneous, who were the first comers among them? Who were the most prominent? All these are questions very hard to answer clearly. It is sometimes argued that we had only one stock of people in Japan besides the Ainu, and that that stock is the homogeneous Japanese. This view is not avowed openly by any scholar worthy of mention, for it is an undeniable fact that in the historical ages groups of immigrants, intentional as well as unintentional, happened to drift into Japan now and then, not only from Korea and China, but from the southern islands also, though not in great numbers, and the occurrence of migrations similar to those in historic ages cannot be absolutely denied to prehistoric times. Besides, any one who pays even but cursory attention to the physical features of the Japanese can easily discern that, besides those who might be regarded as of a genuine Korean or Chinese type, there are many among them who have a physiognomy quite different from either the Korean or the Chinese, though one might be at a loss to tell exactly whether the tincture of the Malayan, Polynesian, or Melanesian blood is predominant. In face of such diversity, too clear to be neglected, none would be bold enough to assert that the Japanese has been a homogeneous race from the beginning. Strangely enough, however, this evidently untenable conception still lies at the bottom of many

historical hypotheses, which will be set right in the future.

If it is most probable that the Japanese is a heterogeneous race, then what are the elements which constitute it? The results of the investigation of many scholars tend to place the home of the bulk of the forefathers of the so-called Japanese in the northeast of the Asiatic continent. Perhaps, from the purely philological point of view, this assumption may be more approximate to the truth than any other. The singular position of the Japanese language in the linguistic system of the world leaves little room for the hypothesis that the bulk of the race came from the south, though it is not at all easy to derive it from the north. In our language we have very few words in common with those now prevailing in the islands which stud the sea to the south of Japan, or in the southern part of the Asiatic continent. On the other hand, the language the most akin to ours is the Korean, though the gap between it and the Japanese language is far wider than that between the Korean and the other continental languages, such as the Mongolian and the Manchurian. If we take, therefore, linguistic similarity as the sole test of the existence of racial affinity, as many scholars are prone implicitly to do, then the bulk of the Japanese must belong to a stock which stood at some time very near to the forefathers of the Koreans, though not descended from the Koreans themselves. In

other words, the Japanese race may be supposed to have had as its integral part a stock of people, who might have lived side by side with the ancestors of the Koreans for a longer time than with other kindred tribes. And if that be really so, the Japanese must have separated from the Koreans long before the end of the prehistoric ages; otherwise we cannot account for so wide a divergence of the two languages as we see at present.

It is a very dangerous feat, of course, to determine any ethnological question solely from a philological standpoint. For the sake of argument, however, let us assume for a while the hypothesis that the main element in the Japanese race came over from the northern Asiatic continent on the opposite shore of the Sea of Japan, by way, perhaps, of the peninsula of Korea and the island of Tsushima, or across the Sea of Japan. The ethnologists who adopt this view assume that the Chinese must be excluded from the above body of immigrants, the Chinese who were doubtlessly a far more advanced people even in those ages than the other neighbouring races, and were destined to become the most influential benefactors of Japanese civilisation. If regarded from the linguistic point of view only, it may be not at all unnatural thus to exclude the Chinese blood from the veins of our forefathers. In order to do so, however, it would be necessary at the same time to presuppose that the Chinese never came into

close contact with the forefathers of the Japanese while the latter were sojourning on the Asiatic continent. It is not, of course, impossible to suppose that the ancestors of the greater part of the Japanese came over into this country without touching China anywhere, because they might have come from eastern Siberia, northern Manchuria, or some other quarter, narrowly avoiding coming into contact with the Chinese, though, actually, it is not a very easy matter to imagine such a case.

Let us, then, drop all idea of the Chinese, and suppose that that race can be put aside in our consideration of the prehistoric Japanese without glaring unnaturalness. Still the question remains unsettled, whether the bulk of our ancestors from the continent contained within it the ruling class, who gave a unity to the heterogeneous population of this Island Empire. One would say that a certain stock among many, who had their abode in northeastern Asia, might have become predominant over the kindred people of various stocks settled previously in Japan. And the cause of the predominance may be supposed to have been a decided advance in civilisation on the part of the chosen stock. That is to say, the tribe in question might have been already in the iron age with respect to its civilisation, while other tribes were still lingering in the neolithic age. But in order to sustain this supposition, it is necessary to premise another assumption that the predominant

stock was comparatively late in coming over to Japan, and that it had already attained the civilisation of the iron age before its immigration into Japan while the other inferior tribes remained at a standstill in their civilisation after settling in our country. Such an assertion, however, cannot be deemed probable without admitting that there was a considerable interruption of communication between Japan and the Asiatic continent before the immigration of the predominant stock. Otherwise it would be very difficult to entertain the idea that the civilisation of northeastern Asia could remain alien to the inhabitants of Japan for so long a time as to cause a wide difference in language, manners and customs, and so on, between the peoples on the two opposite shores of the Sea of Japan.

Besides, to suppose that the forefathers of the greater portion of the Japanese people were immigrants from northeastern Asia, is, by itself, nothing but a hypothesis, supported by a few remains only, which can be interpreted in more than one way. To go one step farther, and assume that the ruling class of the Japanese too came over from the continental shore of the Sea of Japan is another matter, too uncertain to be readily accepted. Whatever degree of probability there may be in these assertions, there are certain items in our history to the natural interpretation of which any solution of all the ethnological prob-

lems must conform; and among those items the following are the most important.

The first to be considered is the style of the Japanese building, especially the style of the Shinto shrines and of the dancing halls frequently attached to them. The architectural style of the ordinary Japanese house has undergone many successive changes during the long course of its history, so that its primitive form is now, to a great extent, lost. For instance, the *tatami,* a thick mat, which covers the floor of a Japanese room and is now one of the most remarkable characteristics of Japanese household fittings, is a comparatively modern invention, only planks having been originally used as the material for flooring. Buddhistic influences too can be traced distinctly in a certain turn of construction copied from China, first in building Buddhistic temples and then widely adopted in building ordinary dwelling-houses. In some essential points, however, there are several traits which cannot be ascribed either to an imitation of any continental style or to the result of a gradual adaptation to the climate. Any one can easily see that the ordinary Japanese house may be good for summer and for southern Japan, but not for winter, especially for the rigid winter of northern Japan. How did such a style come into being? If it had been brought from the northeast of the Asiatic continent by the ancient immigrants from those quarters, it should have been a style more adapted

to the rigid climate of northern Japan, than we find it is. On the other hand, if it were an outcome of a natural development on the Japanese soil, it should have been one more adapted to the climate, as suitable for the winter as for the summer. Does it not amount almost to an absurdity, that the Japanese should still be following this ancient style of architecture in building their houses in Manchuria and Saghalen? Why do they cling to it so tenaciously? One would say, perhaps, that the architectural form of the ordinary Japanese house has undergone changes from various causes, so that one cannot fairly draw absolutely correct conclusions about the primitive dwellings of the ancient Japanese from its present condition. If that be so, let us take the style of the Shinto buildings into consideration. If it can be thought, with reason, that the Shinto building still best retains some of the characteristics of the primitive Japanese house, then the thatched roof of a peculiar construction with projecting beams at both ends of the ridge-pole, together with a highly elevated floor, the space between which and the ground serves sometimes as a cellar, cannot but suggest the existence of a certain relation between the primitive houses of Japan and those of the tropical regions lying to the south of Asia, such as the Dutch East Indian Archipelago and the Philippine Islands, or the southeastern coast of the Asiatic continent.

The next point not to be neglected is rice as the

staple food of the Japanese. Everybody knows that rice is a daily food stuff not only of the Japanese, but of the Chinese and many other Asiatic peoples. In the case of the inhabitants of northern China, however, other kinds of cereals are eaten as well as rice, as a natural consequence of the scanty production of the latter in those regions. And it is worthy of notice that even in southern China this cereal is eaten not as is customary in our country. There they eat rice as well as meat, or rather more meat than rice, while here in Japan meat and fish are mere ancillary foods, rice being the chief article of diet. What is the cause of this difference in the use of rice? Is Japan specially adapted for the production of this grain? Southern Japan of course is not unfit for the cultivation of the plant, viewed from the point of soil and warm climate only. But even there the rice crop is very uncertain on account of the September typhoons, which annually bring new wrinkles of anxious care on the weatherbeaten faces of our farmers. So *a fortiori* rice does not conform to the climate of northern Japan, where the frost arrives often very early and the whole crop is thereby damaged, except a few precocious varieties. This explains the reason, why there have been repeated famines in that region, occurring so frequently that it can be said to be an almost chronic phenomenon. By the choice of this uncertain kind of crop as the principal food stuff, the Japanese have been obliged to acquiesce in a

comparatively enhanced cost of living, which is a great drawback to the unfettered activity of any individual or nation. This is especially true of recent times, since the growth of the population has been constantly forging ahead in comparison with the increase of the annual production of rice. The tardiness of the progress of civilisation in Japanese history may, perhaps, be partly attributed to this fact. Then why did our forefathers prefer rice to other kinds of cereals, in spite of the uncertainty of its harvests? Was it really a choice made in Japan? If the choice was first made in this country, then the unwisdom of the choice and of the choosers is now very patent. On the other hand, to suppose that this choice was made by our ancestors in northeastern Asia during their sojourn in those regions is hardly possible. Moreover, the general use of rice in Japan has been constantly increasing. In old times the use of it was not so common among all classes of the people, though now it can be found everywhere in Japan. This fact also leads us to doubt the assumption that the cultivation of rice was initiated in Japan, or that it was brought by our ancestors from their supposed continental home in northeastern Asia.

What thirdly claims our attention is the *magatama,* a kind of green bead, varying in size. It is one of the few ornaments peculiar to the ancient Japanese, though it does not seem probable that its material was naturally produced in our

country. Without doubt our ancestors were very fond of this kind of bijouterie. It has been excavated in great numbers from old tombs, throughout the whole of historic Japan, and the sepulchral existence of the *magatama* is now generally admitted by most Japanologists as an unmistakable token of a former settlement of the Japanese. It must, however, be remarked that, on the Asiatic continent, *magatama* are found in southern Korea only, the region which once formed a part of the Japanese Empire. Surely it should have been discovered in northern Korea and on the Siberian coast of the Sea of Japan also, if our forefathers, inclusive of the ruling class, came over from northeastern Asia. It is very curious that nothing of the kind has been discovered as yet in those supposed original homes of the Japanese.

The last item we must mention here is the *misogi*. The *misogi* is an old religious custom of lustration by bathing in cold water. In a legend of our mythical age, there is an account of this antique ritual performed by two ancestral deities in a river in Kyushu, and this ritual has come down to our day, of course with some modifications. The custom of actually bathing in the water was afterward superseded by the throwing of effigies into a river, in the annual ceremony of praying publicly to deities. In medieval Japan this usage continued to be practised at a riverside in the summer; but it is almost extinct nowadays.

On the other hand, not as a public ceremony, but as a method of individual self-purification, this custom of lustration is still practised by many pious persons. Almost entirely naked, even in the winter of northern Japan, they pour on themselves several bucketfuls of cold water, and thus purify themselves from head to foot, in order to attest a very special devotion to the deities to whom they pray. This custom of bathing with its religious signification is something that cannot find its likeness anywhere else, either in northeastern Asia, or in China, or in Korea. Whence, then, did the ancient Japanese get this unique custom? Would it not be natural to suppose the custom of bathing, including its religious use, to have originated in some quarter of the torrid regions of the earth than to speak of it as initiated in the frigid zone?

All the four items mentioned above ought by all means to be interpreted adequately and naturally, whatever standpoint one may take in solving ethnological questions concerning the Japanese. The hypothesis that the bulk of our forefathers might have been immigrants from northeastern Asia, is, as already said before, by itself nothing but an assertion, supported mainly by the form of certain prehistoric pottery, which may possibly be interpreted otherwise, perhaps disadvantageously, too, for the assertion. We may accept the hypothesis as probable, taking into consideration the proximity of the supposed home

of our ancestors to Japan. But it avails us not at all in interpreting the points which I have enumerated above. On the contrary, if we concur with the supposition that the ruling class, also, of the Japanese has its original home in the northeastern part of the Asiatic continent like the bulk of the race, then the interpretation of the aforesaid items would become more difficult. It is true that those who would like to derive the origin of the Japanese from northeastern Asia, do not absolutely deny the existence of a certain tropical element in the final formation of the Japanese race, but generally they think that the element must have been very insignificant. They would never go so far as to look to the element for the bulk of our forefathers or for the ancestors of the ruling class. If the tropical element be as insignificant as they suppose, then we should be naturally induced to imagine that those customs alien in their essential nature to the soil and climate of Japan were imported by those immigrants from the tropical South who, insignificant, not only in number, but also in influence, have, notwithstanding, taken a firm root in the historical and social life of the Japanese, struggling against the opposition of overwhelming odds, far more numerous, civilised, and powerful, an utterly impossible hypothesis. How then, did such an incongruous idea with its fatal conclusions come to be entertained by scholars? Because they have too great a faith in the power of civilisation, so-called,

to decide the rise and fall of races in the primitive age.

Those who would uphold the assumption of the northern origin of the Japanese, or at least of its ruling class, tacitly presuppose that the northeastern Asiatics of the prehistoric age were several steps ahead of the contemporary tropical peoples in the progress of civilisation, or at least that one of the many tribes of northeastern Asia was far superior to its neighbours as regards civilisation. Otherwise they think that a certain stock of people, which afterwards became the ruling class in Japan, had attained already the civilisation of the iron age while they were still on the continent, so that when they came over to Japan they would have been far more advanced than the people who had settled in Japan before them. Though it is but a conjecture, it is good so far as it goes. To deduce the domination over alien races simply from the superiority of the civilisation must be another thing. Even in modern times, sheer valour often tells more than superiority of arms in deciding the fate of battles. This must have been even more true in early ages. The empire of Rome was broken asunder by the semi-civilised Germans. In the East, China was repeatedly overrun by nomadic tribes far inferior to the Chinese in civilisation. What is true in this respect in historic times, must be particularly true in prehistoric ages. It is too superficial to think that a tribe in the stage of the iron age

must necessarily conquer in fighting against other tribes knowing and using stone weapons only. In those ages it is strength, ferocity, courage, which tell decidedly more in fighting than any weapon. We need not therefore take much account of the state of civilisation among different primitive tribes in determining the origin of the Japanese race.

On the other hand, we are in no wise bound to minimise the significance of the tropical element, in number as well as in influence, as regards the formation of the Japanese people. The remarkable differences in distance make it very natural to suppose that the immigrants from the tropical regions might have been less numerous than those from the north. Still it is not utterly improbable that a pretty substantial number of the Southerners might have come over into Japan, drifted over not only by the current but by the wind also, sometimes in groups, sometimes sporadically, and that they could subdue the inhabitants by force of martial courage yet unenervated and not by that of a superior civilisation only. The main difficulty in establishing this assertion lies in the fact that it is not quite certain whether they were really brave and heroic enough to achieve such a conquest. As to the linguistic consideration which is the favourite resort of many ethnologists it can be said that it is not more harmful to the one hypothesis than it is advantageous to the

other. It is quite needless to argue that there is little sign of the existence of any linguistic affinity between the language of Japan and those of the tropical lands, except in a few words. This lack of linguistic affinity, however, can be explained away, while maintaining the importance of the ancient immigrants from the South, by considering that the ancestors of the ruling class, having been inferior as regards civilisation to the other stock or stocks of people whom they found already settled prior to them in Japan, and having been perhaps inferior in number also, gradually lost not only their language but many of their racial characteristics as well. Similar examples may be found in abundance in the history of Europe, the Normans in Sicily, and the Goths in Italy being among the most conspicuous. It is not impossible to suppose the like process to have taken place in Japan also.

Summing up what is stated above, I cannot but think that the prehistoric immigrants into our country from the South were by no means a negligible factor in constituting the island nation, though the majority of immigrants might have come from the nearest continental shores, and in this majority it is not necessary to exclude the Chinese element altogether. It seems to me probable that southern Japan, especially the island of Kyushu, was inhabited in the prehistoric age by the Ainu, and by immigrants from the North

as well as from the South side by side. But what was the relative distribution of these agglomerate races at a certain precise date is now a question very hard to settle definitely.

CHAPTER III

JAPAN BEFORE THE INTRODUCTION OF BUDDHISM AND CHINESE CIVILISATION

Before entering into a description of the early history of Japan, it may be of some service to the foreign reader to learn when the authentic history of Japan begins. Generally it is not an easy matter to draw a distinct line of demarcation between the historic and the prehistoric age in the history of any country, and in order to get rid of this difficulty, an intermediate age called the proto-historic was invented by modern scholars, and has been in vogue up to now. It is true that, by making use of this term, one aim was surely attained, but two difficulties were thereby created in lieu of one dismissed. We were freed indeed from the hard task of making a delicate discrimination between the historic and the prehistoric age, but at the same time we took up the burden of distinguishing the proto-historic age from both the historic and the prehistoric! And these new difficulties cannot be said to be easier to meet than the old, so that it may be doubted whether it was wise to intercalate the proto-historic age between the two, if the promotion of

scientific exactitude was the main purpose of such an intercalation. A polygon, however the number of its sides be augmented, can never make a circle in the exact sense. I shall not, therefore, try to adhere scrupulously to the above-mentioned threefold division in discharging the task which I have undertaken.

Let me turn then to the line of demarcation between the historic and the prehistoric age without troubling myself about the proto-historic. This line must be drawn by first making clear the signification of the historic age, and not by defining the term "prehistoric." What, then is the historic age? It may be defined as an age, the authentic history of which can, in a large measure, be ascertained, or as an age which has an historical record, contemporary and fairly reliable. It is to be regretted that we cannot dispense with such precautionary expressions as 'to a large measure' and 'fairly', but we cannot avoid retaining them, and therein lies the true difficulty of making an exact demarcation. Moreover, an age, the history of which was regarded at one time as impossible of being ascertained, often may become ascertainable as the result of ever-increasing discoveries of new materials as well as of the new methods of their deciphering. In other words, the demarcation, however conscientiously made at one time, is liable to be shifting, and the reason for the demarcation gradually changes *pari passu*. As the word prehistoric has now begun to be used

independently of 'historic', the historic age may be better defined as an age which has a civilisation advanced enough to have a record of its own. So far a country may be said to be in an historic age, even at an epoch the historical sources of which are considered not to be extant anywhere, only if the standard of civilisation be high enough for that. Unless we adopt this definition, the line of demarcation may shift more and more into antiquity, as the result of ever-increasing discoveries of new materials as well as of the methods of their interpretation, and the demarcation itself will become of very little value. So far a country may be said to be in an historic age, even at an epoch the historical sources of which are considered not to be extant anywhere. But how can we know whether a country has reached a stage of civilisation advanced enough to have its own record? It is almost impossible to discover this point without resorting to authentic historical sources. And in order that we may so resort, those sources must be extant. In this way if we want to make the demarcation full of significance, we have to beg the question *ad infinitum*.

In the history of Japan, too, what is said above holds true, and the demarcation, however dexterously made, will not assist much in the study of it. Among foreigners, however, the question how far can we go back with certainty in the history of Japan, is a very popular topic, and has been discussed with very keen interest. For the

sake of elucidation, therefore, I will give a short account of the early chronicles concerning the history of our country.

Among the old chronicles of Japan there are two which are especially conspicuous. The one is the *Kojiki,* the other the *Nihongi.* It is generally admitted that these two chronicles are the oldest extant and the most substantial of all the historical sources of ancient Japan. The compilation of the former was concluded in 712 A.D. by a savant called Oh-no-Yasumaro, while that of the latter was undertaken by several royal historiographers, and finished in 720 A.D. under the auspices of Prince Toneri. That the compilation of the two great chronicles took place successively in the beginning of the eighth century is one of the symptoms showing the dawning of the national consciousness of the Japanese, to which I shall refer in the following chapters. In their characteristics, these two chronicles differ somewhat from each other. The materials of the *Kojiki* were first made legible and compiled by Hieta-no-Are, an intelligent courtier in the reign of the Emperor Temmu, and afterwards revised by the aforesaid Oh-no-Yasumaro. Considering that there was only a very short time left at the disposal of Yasumaro to spend in revising the work before dedicating it to the Empress Gemmyo, it can be safely concluded that Yasumaro did not try to make any great alteration, and the *Kojiki* remained for the most part as it had been compiled

by Hieta-no-Are. The other chronicle, the *Nihongi,* was finished eight years after the *Kojiki,* and submitted to the Empress by Prince Toneri, the president of the historiographical commission. If we suppose this commission to be a continuation of what was inaugurated by the royal order of the Emperor Temmu in the tenth year of his reign, then the commission may be said to have taken about forty years in compiling the chronicle. In some respects the *Kojiki* may be regarded as one of the byproducts of the compilation, Hieta-no-Are being probably one of the assistants of the commission. The essential difference between the two chronicles is that the *Kojiki* was exclusively compiled from Japanese sources, written by Japanese as well as by naturalized Koreans, and retained much of the colloquial form of ancient Japanese narrated stories, while in the case of the *Nihongi* many Chinese historical works were consulted, and historical events were so arranged as to conform to what was stated in those Chinese records. Many *bon mots,* it is true, were often borrowed from ancient Chinese classics, and this ornamented and exaggerated style was often pursued at the expense of historical truth, and on that account most of the later historians of our country give less credit to the *Nihongi* than to the *Kojiki,* though this scepticism about the former is somewhat undeserved.

It is beyond question that the two chronicles mentioned above are the oldest historical works

written in Japan, now extant. They are not, however, the earliest attempts at historical compilation in our country. Just a hundred years before the compilation of the *Nihongi* was finished, the Empress Suiko, in the twenty-eighth year of her reign, that is, in 620 A.D. ordered the Crown Prince, known as Shôtoku, and Soga-no-Umako, the most influential minister in her court, to compile the chronicles of the imperial house, of various noted families and groups of people, and a history of the country with its provinces. If these chronicles had been completed and preserved to this day, they would have been the oldest we have. Unfortunately, however, by the premature death of the Crown Prince, the compilation was abruptly terminated, and what was partly accomplished seems to have been kept at the house of Soga-no-Umako, until it was burnt down by his son Yemishi, when he was about to be executed by imperial order in 645 A.D. Fragments of the archives, it is said, were picked up out of the blazing fire, but nothing more was ever heard of them. There is a version now called the *Kujiki,* and this has been misrepresented to be that very chronicle, which, it was feigned, was not really lost, but offered in an unfinished state to the Empress the next year after the death of prince Shôtoku. If this be true, the record which was burnt must have been one of several copies of the incomplete chronicle, which, as Euclid would say, is absurd! It is now generally agreed that the chronicle is

spurious, though it may contain some citations from sources originally authentic.

Whatever be the criticism on the chronicle *Kujiki,* there is no doubting the fact that the work of compiling a history was initiated in the reign of the Empress Suiko, and partly put into execution. Not only that. There might have been many other chronicles and historical manuscripts in existence anterior to the compilation of the *Nihongi,* and afterwards lost. In the *Nihongi* are mentioned the names of the books which were consulted in the course of compilation. Among them may be found the names of several sets of the annals of a peninsular state called Kutara, various Chinese historical works, and a history of Japan written by a Korean priest. Some of the books are not named explicitly, and passages from them are cited as "from a book" merely, but we can easily perceive that they were mostly from Japanese records.

So far I have spoken about chronicles which were compiled of set purpose as a record of the times and worthy to be called historical works. As to other kinds of manuscripts, for instance, various family records and fragmentary documents of various sorts, there might have been a considerable number of these, and it is probable that they were utilized by the compilers of the *Kojiki* and of the *Nihongi,* though the latter mentions very few of such materials, and the former is entirely silent concerning its sources. The

question then arises how this presumably large number of manuscripts came to be formed. We have no written character which may be called truly our own. All forms of the ideographs in use in our country were borrowed from China, intact or modified. And in ancient Japan an utter lack of knowledge of the Chinese characters prevailed for a long time throughout most classes of the people. If this were so, by whom were those documents transcribed? In the reign of the Emperor Richû, *circa* 430 A.D., scribes were posted in each province to prepare archives, a fact which implies that the emperor and magistrates had their own scribes already. Who then were appointed as the scribes? To explain this I must turn for a while to the history of the Korean peninsula and its relations with China.

Wu-ti, the most enterprising emperor of the Han dynasty, was the first to push his military exploration into the Korean peninsula, and from 107 B.C. onward the northern parts of the peninsula were successively turned into Chinese provinces. This was the beginning of the infiltration of Chinese civilisation into those regions. Afterwards on account of the internal disturbances of the Chinese empire, her grip on the conquered provinces became a little loosened, but at the beginning of the third century A.D. a strong independent Chinese state constituted itself on the east of the river Lyao, and Chinese influence thereby once more extended itself vigorously over

the northern half of the peninsula: a new province was added to the south. In the districts which had thus become Chinese provinces, not only were governors sent from China, but a number of colonists must also have settled there, so that through them Chinese civilisation continued to infiltrate more and more, though very slowly, into the peninsula. This infiltration lasted till the middle of the fourth century, when the Chinese provinces in the peninsula were overrun and occupied by the Kokuri or the Koreans properly so called, who came from the northeast, and by this invasion of the barbarians the progress of civilisation in the peninsula was for a time obstructed. Still there might have remained a certain number of the descendants of the older Chinese colonists, and it is possible that they still retained some vestige of the civilisation introduced by their ancestors. The history of the peninsula at this period may be well pictured by comparing it to the history of Britain with its lingering Roman civilisation at the time of the Saxon conquest. It is just at the end of this period that Japan came into close contact with the peninsular peoples.

It is almost impossible to ascertain from reliable sources how far back we can trace our connection with the peninsula. According to a chronicle of Shiragi, a state which once existed in the southeast of the peninsula, one of the Japanese invasions of that state is dated as early as

49 B.C. Since the value of the chronicle as historical material is very dubious, it is dangerous to put much faith in this statement at present. We may, however, venture to assume that in the first half of the third century A.D. the intercourse between Japan and Korea became suddenly very intimate. Japan invaded the peninsula more frequently than before, and our emissaries were despatched to the Chinese province established to the north of it. Nay, not only that, some of them penetrated into the interior of China proper, as far as the capital of Wei, and on the way back seem to have been escorted by a Chinese official stationed in the peninsular province. Memoirs by those Chinese who had thus opportunities of peeping into a corner of our country, were incorporated by Chen-Shou, a Chinese historian at the end of the third century, in his general description of Japan, a chapter in the *San-kuo-chih,* which has remained to this day one of the most valuable sources concerning the early history of our country. This intercourse between the peninsula and Japan, sometimes friendly and sometimes hostile, happened to be accentuated by the expedition of the Empress Jingu to Shiragi in the middle of the fourth century. Soon after this expedition, Chinese civilisation, which had achieved a considerable progress during the long Han dynasty, began to flow into Japan, and effected a remarkable change in both the social and the political life of our country. For just at this time

the two northern states of the peninsula, Korea or Kokhuri and Kutara, advanced rapidly in their civilisation, so that a school to teach Chinese literature was founded in the former, while in the latter a post was instituted in the royal service for a man of letters. And Shiragi, another state in the south-eastern part of the peninsula, ceased to be a barrier to communication between those two peninsular states and Japan, as it had been before the expedition of the Empress.

Among the boons conferred by the introduction of Chinese civilisation through the intermediation of the peninsular states, that which had had the most beneficial and enduring effect was the use of the written character. It cannot be said with certainty that the Chinese characters were totally unknown to the Japanese before the aforesaid expedition of the Empress. On the contrary, there are several indications from which we can surmise that they had chances to catch glimpses of the Chinese ideographs. It is beyond the scope of probability, however, to suppose that these ideographic characters were used by the Japanese themselves at so early a period, in order to commit to writing whatever might have pleased them to do so. At the utmost we cannot go further than to assume that certain immigrants from the peninsula, some of whom probably came over to this country before the expedition, as well as their descendants, might have used the Chinese ideographs. Among the immigrants some may have

been of Chinese origin while others were of peninsular origin, but imbued with Chinese culture. But even in these cases the use of the characters must have been limited to recording their own family chronicles or simple business transactions. It can be believed, too, that the number of those who were acquainted with the written characters at that time was very small even among the immigrants themselves. It is needless to say that public affairs were not yet committed to writing. That up to the time of the expedition the standard of civilisation in the peninsular states stood not much higher than that of Japan may also account for the illiteracy which had continued so long.

Shortly after the Empress Jingu's incursion into Korea the literary culture of the peninsular states rose suddenly to a higher standard than that of our country, and enabled them to send into Japan men versed in writing and reading Chinese characters. At the same time their immigration was encouraged by the Japanese emperors, and some of the literati were enlisted into the imperial service. As Japan had at that time a quasi-caste system, everybody pursuing the profession which he had inherited from his forefathers, and people belonging to the same profession forming a group by themselves, several groups were thus formed, which made reading and writing their exclusive profession. Almost all the scribes appointed in the reign of the Emperor

Richû must have belonged to one of the families in those groups. As a matter of course members of the imperial family and those belonging to the aristocracy began in process of time to be initiated in the elements of Chinese literature; but still, writing, as a business, continued to be entrusted to the members of the groups of the penman's craft, and they, too, rejoiced in monopolising posts and professions which could not dispense with writing, as secretaries, councillors, notaries, and ambassadors to foreign countries, and the like. Naturally chroniclers and historians were to be found solely among them, and there remains little doubt that far the greater part of the historical manuscripts consulted by the compilers of the *Nihongi* were written by those professional scribes.

It is not much to be wondered at that the art of writing was entrusted to certain groups of people, while the dominant class in general remained illiterate. What is most strange is that such a condition could continue for a very long time in our country, the learned groups, who had, in their hands, the key of public and private business, being subjected to the rule of the illiterate. Could it not be explained by supposing that the ruling class of ancient Japan, though destitute of book education, yet was endowed with natural abilities, which were more than enough to cope with the literary culture of that time? If otherwise, then their prestige should have been easily

shaken by the class of literati within a short interval. It is to be regretted that we have very few sources to prove positively the ability and attainments peculiar to the Japanese of that time, but this long continuance of the illiteracy of the ruling class may serve as a negative proof, that at least the ruling class was a gifted people, more gifted than was to be surmised from their illiteracy.

Here the reader would perhaps ask, must the condition of ancient Japan remain shrouded in mystery forever? Will it be utterly impossible to know something positive about it? On the contrary, however vague, uncertain, and incredible legends and sources concerning them may be, still we may extract some positive knowledge from our scanty and often questionable materials, so as to obviate the necessity of groping hopelessly in the dark. That the ancient Japanese were averse from any kind of pollution, physical as well as mental, can be unmistakably perceived, evidence being too prevalent in numerous legends, and it can also be attested by many manners and customs preserved until the later ages. This is the real essence of future Shintoism. About the rite of the *misogi,* or bathing, I have already spoken in the foregoing chapter. Wanting literary education, they did not know what hypocrisy was, and were quite ignorant of the art of sophistication. Being utterly naïve, it was not uncommon that they erred in judgment. But once aware of their

fault, they could not help going to lustrate themselves and make atonement, in order to get rid of sin. Warlike and superbly valiant, they were very far from being vindictive. Traits of cruelty are hardly to be found in the mythological and legendary narratives. The ancient Japanese were, we have good reason to believe, more humorous than the modern Japanese.

The description of Japan in the *San-kuo-chih* furnishes many interesting data besides what I have stated above. We learn from it that our ancestors were not in the least litigious, and thieves were rare. Transgressors of the law were punished with confiscation of wives and children. In case of the more serious crimes, not only the criminal but his dependents also were subjected to severe penalties. Women were noted for their chastity. Elders were respected, and instances of longevity sometimes reckoning a hundred years of age were not rare. Augury was implicitly believed in, and when people were at a loss how to decide in public affairs as well as in private, they used to set fire to the shoulder bone of a deer, and by the cleavage thereby produced, divined the will of the deities. When they had to set out for a long voyage, they accompanied a man, who took upon himself the whole responsibility for the safety of the voyage and the health of all on board, by subjecting himself to a hard discipline, and leading a very ascetic life. If any of the crew fell ill, or the tran-

quillity of the voyage was disturbed, he was called on to put his life at stake. Periodical markets used to be opened in several provinces, where commodities were exchanged. Tribute was paid by the people in kind. Cattle and horses were rarely to be seen. Though iron was known in making weapons, yet arms made of other materials such as bone, bamboo, flint, and so forth were still to be found in use here and there.

Such was the state of our country as witnessed by Chinese visitors in the first half of the third century A.D. Their observations might not have been very accurate, but they strangely coincide in general with conclusions which could be drawn from Japanese sources. The author of the *San-kuo-chih,* moreover, says that there was a great resemblance in manners and customs between Japan and the island of Hai-nan on the southern coast of China. This assertion may be highly suggestive as to the ethnological study of Japan. An ancient custom of Japan called *kugatachi,* a kind of ordeal to prove one's innocence by dipping a hand into boiling water and taking out some article therefrom unhurt, is said to have been practised by the people of Hai-nan too. To believe hastily, however, in a racial connection between the Japanese and the inhabitants of Hai-nan is a very dangerous matter. Another fact that cannot be overlooked in the Chinese narratives is a passage concerning the continual warfare in

Japan, though only a short description of it is given in them.

In the preceding chapter I have spoken about the heterogeneity of the Japanese as a race. Among the various racial factors, however, none was able to keep for a long time its racial independence and separateness from the bulk of the Japanese except the Ainu. Other minor factors were lost in the chaotic concourse of races or swallowed up in the midst of the most powerful element. Even the Kumaso, who were once the strongest element in the island of Kyushu, succumbed to the arms of the Japanese not long after the peninsular expedition of the Empress Jingu. The Ainu, too, intermingled with the dominant race wherever circumstances were favourable to such a union. Having been the predecessors of the Japanese, however, in the order of settling in this country, and having moreover been the next most powerful race to it, the Ainu only have been able to retain their racial entity, though continuously decreasing in numbers, up to the present time.

In the long history of the antagonism between the Japanese and the Ainu, which covers more than a thousand years, the Ainu were on the whole the losing party, retreating before the Japanese. Surely, however, they must have made a stubborn resistance now and then. That they formerly occupied the island of Kyushu, we know from the archæological remains. But, from re-

liable historical records, we cannot know anything certain about the race, until the time when they are to be found fighting against the Japanese in the northern part of Hon-to. Still it is beyond doubt, that there must have been not a few intervening phases, and one of the phases, which is important, coincides with the period when the visit of the Chinese officials took place.

Most of the countries of the world may be divided into two or more parts, the people of each of which differ from those of the others in mental and physical traits. Boundary lines in this case generally conform to the geographical features of the land, but not necessarily so always. If we have to draw lines dividing the island of Hon-to in accordance with linguistic considerations, it is more natural to divide it first into two rather than into three or more parts, and the dividing line here is not the most conspicuous geographical boundary. The line begins on the north at a spot near Nutari, on the Sea of Japan, a little eastward of the city of Niigata in the province of Yechigo, and after running vertically southward, on the whole keeping to the meridian of 139° 1/3 E. till it reaches the southern boundary of the province, it turns abruptly to the west along the boundary between Yechigo and Shinano, which lies nearly on the latitude 36° 5/6 N.; and then it runs again toward the south along the western boundary of the provinces Shinano and Tôtômi, which is almost identical with the meridian 137°

½ E. This is of course an average line drawn from several linguistic considerations, such as accentuation, dialectic peculiarities and the like, but at the same time, besides the linguistic differences there are other kinds noticeable on both sides of the line. It would not therefore be very wide of the mark, if we adopt this line as a boundary dividing Hon-to with regard to the difference in the standard of the civilisation in general. No other line drawn on the map of Japan can divide it in such a way as to make one part so distinctly different from the other. If the reader will glance at the map, he can easily see that the line does not well agree with the geographical features, especially in those parts running vertically southward. No insurmountable natural barrier can be found, particularly on the Pacific coast. Consequently the best interpretation of the boundary line must come not from geography, but from history.

Not only in the case of Japan, but in Western countries too, broad rivers or big mountain chains do not necessarily form the lines of internal and external division. The great Balkan range could not hinder the Bulgarians of East Roumelia from uniting with their brethren to the north of the mountain. The Rhine, the most historic river in the world, has never in reality been made a boundary between France and Germany which could last for long, and the antagonism of the two countries, which has continued for many centuries, is

the result of the earnest but hardly realisable desire on both sides to make the river a perpetual boundary. More than that, even inside Germany the Rhine joins rather than divides the regions on both sides of it.

Take again for example the boundary between England and Scotland. If we follow merely the geographical conditions, we may shift the boundary line a little northward, or perhaps southward too, with better or at least equal reason. In order to account for the present boundary, we cannot but look back into the history of the district, from the age of the Picts and Britons downward. If it had been a dividing line of shorter duration dating only from the Middle Ages, it would not have been able to maintain itself so long, and the differences of not only dialects but of temperament and various mental characteristics would not have been so decisive.

We have no Picts-wall, no limes in our country, but the boundary line delineated above divides Japan into two parts, the one different from the other in various ways, more remarkably than could be effected by drawing any other boundary line elsewhere. Then where lies the reason which makes the Ainu line so significant? It must be attributed to the fact that the line stood for many centuries as a frontier of the Japanese against the Ainu. In other words, the Ainu must have made the most stubborn resistance on this line against the advancing Japanese. Japan had

to become organised and consolidated in a great measure, so as to be called a well-defined entity, before the Japanese could penetrate beyond the line to the east and north. The exploration of Northern Japan is the result of this penetration and of the infiltration of the civilisation which had come into being in the already compact south. Thus the difference between the two parts grew to be a clearly perceptible one. In some respects it can be well compared to the difference between Cape Colony and the two states, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, which were formed by the emigrants from the former.

The fortress of Nutari had been for a long time the outpost of the Japanese against the Ainu on the side of the Sea of Japan. With this fortress as a pivot the boundary line gradually turned toward the north, pushed forward by the arms of the Japanese. The movement must have been made at a very unequal pace in different ages, and where the progress was very slow or stopped short and could not go on for a long time, there we may draw another boundary line, thus marking several successive stages. Politically to efface the significance of these lines was thought to be necesary for the unification of the Empire by the Emperors and their ministers in successive ages, and in that respect more than enough has been achieved by them. Apart from political considerations, however, those lines, which mark the boundaries in successive phases, are almost per-

ceptible to this day. And none of those lines is so full of meaning as the one which I have emphasised above. At first sight it would seem strange that while the fortress of Nutari remained stationary as an outpost for a very long time, there cannot be found any corresponding spot on the Pacific side east of the line. But the difficulty may be cleared away easily, if one thinks of the fact that the line was moved on more swiftly to the right than to the left where the fort Nutari was situated.

In the first half of the third century after Christ the Japanese were still fighting on the line against the Ainu. And the time when the Chinese officials came over to this country falls in the same period. In the description given in the *San-kuo-chih* the names of about thirty provinces under the suzerainty of the court of Yamato are mentioned, to identify all of which with modern names is a very difficult and practically a hopeless task. But this much is certain, that none of them could have denoted a province east of the line. Moreover, we can tell from a passage in the same work that the war with the Ainu at that time had been a very serious one for our ancestors, for it is stated that the course of the war was reported to the Chinese official stationed in the peninsular province by the Japanese ambassador despatched there.

Turning to the southwestern part of Japan, it cannot be said that the whole island of Kyushu

was already at the disposal of the Emperor of that time. In the region which roughly corresponds with the province of Higo, a tribe called the Kumaso defied the imperial power, and continued to do so to an age later than the period of which I have just spoken. It was perhaps not earlier than the middle of the fourth century that their resistance was finally broken. South of the Kumaso, there lived another tribe called the Haito in the district afterwards known as the province of Satsuma. Some of the tribesmen were wont to serve as warriors in the army of the Emperor from very early times, especially in the imperial bodyguard. Still the imperial sway could not easily be extended to their home. The last insurrection of the Haito tribe is recorded to have happened at the end of the seventh century. That these southern tribes were subdued more easily than the Ainu on the north, may be attributed to the fact that their numbers were comparatively small, and that they might have been more akin in blood to the important element of the Japanese race than the Ainu were.

CHAPTER IV

GROWTH OF THE IMPERIAL POWER
GRADUAL CENTRALISATION

It is a privilege of historians to look back. By looking back I do not mean judging the past from the standpoint of the present. Though it is quite obvious that past things should be valued first by the standards of the age contemporaneous with the things to be valued, it would be a great mistake, if we supposed that the duty of historians was fulfilled when they could depict the past as it was seen by its contemporaries. Historians are by no means bound to adhere to the opinions of the ancients in judging of what happened in the past. How a past thing was viewed and valued by its contemporary is in itself an important historical fact, which must be subjected to the criticism of historians. Not only to have a clear idea of the views held by the people of a certain period as regards contemporaneous events, a task which is not hopelessly difficult though not very easy, but also to know why such and such views happened to be held by those people at that time, is a duty far more important and difficult to discharge. Historians ought, besides, to make clear the abso-

lute value of such views and the effects of them on the age in question as well as on the period that followed. However necessary it may be to be acquainted with the thoughts and beliefs of former generations, it is not indeed incumbent upon us to believe blindly what was believed in the past and to think on the same lines as was thought by the ancients. Who would not laugh at our folly, for example, if we should consider the whale of old times to have been a kind of fish, simply because the ancients did not know it to be a species of mammalia, though by such a supposition we might perhaps be very loyal to the old beliefs? As the result of investigations over long years, many things that have been held to be totally different by ancient peoples have been found to be similar to one another, nay, sometimes just the same. On the other hand, there have not been wanting examples in which essential differences, though considerable in reality, have been overlooked or thought to be negligible, and first discerned only after the researches of hundreds of years. In uncivilised times, generally speaking, men were rather quick to observe outward and superficial distinctions, while very slow to discover internal and essential variations. There was a time in the far-off days of yore, both in the East and in the West, when some people held themselves to be unique and chosen, and regarded others, who were apparently not as they were and spoke languages different from their own, to be

decidedly inferior in civilisation to themselves, or to be more akin to beasts than to human beings. Were the Japanese then at the beginning of their history different from other peoples at a similar stage of development, or were they unique from the first? To give too definite an answer to such a question is always a mistake. Our forefathers were certainly different from other peoples in certain respects, but they had much in common with others too. To be unique is very interesting to look at, but it does not follow necessarily that what is unique is always worthy of admiration. Uniqueness is an honour to the possessor of that quality only when he is inimitably excellent on that account. On the other hand, to possess much of what is common to many is far from being a disgrace. Among things which are not unique at all may be found those which have universal validity, and are by no means to be despised as commonplace. Our forefathers had not a few precious things which were singular to themselves, but at the same time they had much in common with outsiders too, and by that possession of common valuables, the history of Japan may rank among those of civilised nations, being not only interesting but also instructive.

By the Japanese of later ages it was supposed that all people outside historic Japan were radically different from themselves, thus forgetting that their own ancestors had been of mixed blood. This proves, by the way, how easily the process

of amalgamation and assimilation of different races was accomplished in ancient Japan. There was hardly a tinge of racial antipathy among our forefathers of old. Parallel with the sense of discrimination against other people, which must have been founded on the perception of superficial differences and on that account not deep-rooted, there prevailed among them an ardent love for all sorts of things foreign, and they extended a hearty welcome to all the successive immigrants into Japan, from whatever quarter of the world they might come. Far from being maltreated, these immigrants were not only allowed to pursue their favourite occupations of livelihood, but were even entrusted with several important posts in the government and in the Imperial Household. Our forefathers did not hesitate, too, to import sundry foreign, especially Chinese, customs and institutions, with or without alteration. Such spontaneous importation readily accomplished, evidently implies that Japan was considered by the ancient Japanese to have had much in common with China, so that the same ways of living might be followed, and similar legislation might be put into practice here as well as there. More than that. Our ancestors naïvely believed themselves able to see the same effects produced by the same legislation here as in China, like ignorant farmers, who sometimes foolishly expect to be able to reap the same harvests by sowing the same kinds of seed, forgetting the differences in the nature of

the soil. So eager were they to transplant everything foreign into Japan. At the present time, there are similarly many who think that things foreign can be planted in this country so as to bear the same fruit as in their original homes, and who therefore would try to import as many as possible. The only difference between them and the ancient Japanese lies in the fact that their preferences are for things European instead of things Chinese. Now-a-days the Japanese are frequently described as a people who entertain an inveterate antagonism to foreigners. Can such an opinion hold ground in the face of the indisputable evidence of Japan's importation of so many foreign things, material as well as spiritual?

Returning to the point, did Japan become a country resembling China, as was wished by the Sinophil Japanese of old times? On the contrary, the uniqueness, which lay at the foundation of the political and social life of our country, was not thereby much impaired. Even now it is clear to everybody that Japan is not behind any other country in possessing what is unique. It must be borne in mind, however, that what the ancient Japanese thought to be sufficient to distinguish themselves from other people was not the same as that which makes the modern Japanese think their country to be unique. At the same time it can be said that ancient Japan, while unique in some respects, was in a similar condition, social and political, as other countries were at a similar

stage of their civilisation. What, then, was the state of Japan in the beginning of her history? It is this which I am going to describe.

In a foregoing chapter I stated that the Japanese, whatever ethnological interpretation be given to them, can hardly be considered as autochthons. Most probably the greater part of them was descended from immigrants; in other words, their forefathers were the conquerors of the land. What then was the chief occupation of these conquerors? To this question various answers have been already given by different historians. Some hold that argiculture was the main occupation to which our ancestors looked for a living, while others maintain that they chiefly depended for subsistence on more unsettled sorts of occupation, that is, on hunting or fishing. All that can be ascertained is that the forefathers of the Japanese did not lead, at least in this country, a nomadic life, so that both cattle and horses were rare or almost unheard of in very ancient times. It is very probable, too, that in whatever occupation the original Japanese might have been chiefly engaged, they must have been also acquainted with the elements of agriculture at the same time. No reliable evidence, however, can be found to answer this question. In this respect the certitude of the early history of Japan falls far short of that of the German tribes, which, though not civilised enough to have left records of their own, were yet fortunate enough to be described by

writers of more civilised races, especially by the Romans. Early Japan seems not to have had as intimate an intercourse with China as the early Germans had with Rome, so that we have great difficulty in ascertaining any details about social and political conditions as well as the modes of life of the ancient Japanese, in the same way as that in which we are acquainted with the early land-system of the Germans, their methods of fighting, and so forth. As to the land-system of early Japan, almost nothing is known about it until the introduction of the Chinese land-distribution procedure in the first half of the seventh century. We cannot ascertain whether there was anything which might be compared with the early land-system of the Teutons. The introduction of the elaborate organisation of the T'ang dynasty into our country may be interpreted in two ways. It may be assumed that a land-distribution similar to that of the Chinese had already existed in Japan, and that this facilitated the introduction of the foreign methods, which were of the same type but more highly developed, or we may deny the previous existence of any such arrangement in our country, reasoning from the fact that the newly introduced foreign system could not take deep root in our country on account of its incompatibility with native traditions. What, however, we can state with some degree of certainty concerning the early history of Japan, prior to the introduction of Chinese institutions, is that the

people, or rather groups of people, figured in the social system as objects of possession quite as much as did landed property.

The land of Japan, so far as it had been conquered and explored by our forefathers up to the Revolution of the Taikwa era in the first half of the seventh century, consisted of the imperial domains and the private properties held by subjects by the same right as that by which the emperor held his domains. In other words, the relation of the emperor with his subjects was not through lands granted to the latter by the former, but was a personal relation. The idea of vassalage due to the holding of crown lands seems not to have been entertained by the early Japanese. From the point of view of the free rights of the landholders, ancient Japan resembles early German society. Only the way which the tenant took possession of his land can not be ascertained so definitely as in the case of allod-holding in Europe. There is no doubt, however, that not only land but persons also formed the most important private properties. Needless to say, people who dwelt on private land were *ipso facto* the property of the landowner. Without any regard to land a seigneur of early Japan could own a certain number of persons, and in that case the land inhabited by them naturally became the property of their master.

The Emperor, who was the greatest seigneur as the owner of vast domains and of a large num-

ber of persons, ruled at the same time over many other seigneurs, the big freeholders of land and serf. It may be supposed also that there might have been many minor freemen besides, who were not rich enough to possess sufficient serfs to cultivate their grounds for them and, therefore, were obliged to support themselves by their own toil. Nothing positive is known, however, about them, if they ever really existed. The right of a seigneur over his clients was almost absolute, even the lives and chattels of his clients being at his his disposal, though the seingeur himself lay under the jurisdiction of the Emperor. Some of the seigneurs were men of the same race as the imperial family, their ancestors having helped in the conquest of the country. Others were scions of the imperial family itself. It is very probable, nevertheless, that no insignificant portion of this seigneur class was of a blood different from that of the imperial family, having sprung from the aboriginal race, or from immigrants other than the stock to which the imperial family belonged.

The extent of the land over which a seigneur held sway, was in general not very great, so that it cannot be fairly compared with any modern Japanese province or *kuni*. Side by side with these seigneurs who were lords of their lands, there was another class of seigneurs, who were conspicuous, not, strictly speaking, on account of the land which they *de facto* possessed, but on account of their being chieftains of certain groups

of people. Some of these groups were formed by men pursuing the same occupation. Groups thus formed were those of fletchers, shield-makers, jewellers, mirror-makers, potters, and so forth. Performers of religious rites, fighting-men, and scribes, too, were grouped in this class. It must be especially noticed that groups of men-at-arms and of scribes contained a good many foreign elements, far more distinctly than other groups. Scribes, though their profession as a craft was of a higher and more important nature than others, were, as was explained in the last chapter, exclusively of foreign blood. On account of this there was more than one set of such immigrants, and we had in Japan several groups of scribes. As to soldiers or men-at-arms, those who served in the first stage of the conquest of this country must have been of the same stock as the conquering race. Later on, however, quite a number of men who were not properly to be called Japanese, as, for example, the Ainu and the Haito, began to be enlisted into the service of the Emperor, and notwithstanding their difference in blood from that of the predominant stock, their fidelity to the Emperor was almost incomparable, and furnished many subjects for our old martial poems.

All these were groups organised on the basis of the special professions pursued by the members of each respective group, although many of the groups might consist eventually of persons of

homogeneous blood. Besides these groups there was another kind based solely on identity of blood, that is to say, on the principle of racial affinity. When we examine the circumstances of the formation of such groups, we generally find that a body of immigrants at a certain period was constituted as a group by itself by way of facilitating the administration. Sometimes several bodies of immigrants, differing as to the period of immigration, were formed into one large corps. In the corps thus formed, there would have naturally been people of various occupations, connected only by blood relationship.

The third kind of group was quite unique in the motive of its formation. It was customary in ancient times in Japan to organise a special group of people in memory of a certain emperor or of some noted member of the imperial family. This happened generally in the case of those personages who died early and were much lamented by their nearest relations. Sometimes, however, a similar group was formed in honour of a living emperor. As it was natural that groups thus formed paid little attention to the consanguinity of their members, it is presumable that they might have consisted of persons of promiscuous racial origin. On the other hand, it is also clear that there could be no necessity for conglomerating intentionally men of heterogenous racial origin in order to effect a mixture of blood between them. Such a motive is hardly to be considered as com-

patible with the spirit of the age in which the scrutinising of genealogies was an important business. Added to this, the organisation of a group out of people of different stocks would have incurred the danger of making its administration exceedingly difficult. As to the profession pursued by persons belonging to such a group, any generalisation is difficult. Some groups might have been organised mainly from the need of creating efficient agricultural labour, in order to provide for the increasing necessity of food stuffs; in other words, from the need for the exploration of new lands. Other memorial groups might have been formed for the sake of providing for the need of various kinds of manual labour, and must have contained men of divers handicrafts and professions, so as to be able to provide for all the daily necessities of some illustrious personage, to whom the group was subject. When men of promiscuous professions formed a group and produced sundry kinds of commodities, the custom of bartering must have naturally arisen within it, but the stage of bartering in a market, periodically opened at a certain spot, such as is described in the *San-kuo-chih,* must have been the result of a gradual development. Moreover, it would be a too hasty conclusion to say that such a group was a selfproviding economic community. On the other hand, to suppose that such a group was a corporation something like the guilds of medieval Europe would be absurd. Though the members

of a guild suffered greatly under the oppression of its master, still no relation of vassalage is recognisable in the system. In old Japan, however, men grouped in the manner described above belonged to the chieftain of that group, that is to say, they were not only his subjects but his property, to be disposed of at his free will. As to the groups which pursued a special craft, I do not deny the existence of the practice of bartering between them. In a society in the stage of civilisation of old Japan, no one could exist without some sort of bartering, and the ruling hand was not so strong and rigorous as to be able to prohibit an individual of the group from exchanging the work of his hands with those of men of neighbouring groups, even when the lord of the group wished contrariwise. And it must be kept in mind that though a member of the group of a special profession pursued that profession as his daily business, yet he must have been engaged in agricultural work also, tilling the ground, presumably in the midst of which his house stood. Agricultural products thus raised could perhaps not cover all the demands of his family for subsistence. But, on the other hand, that all the victuals they required were supplied by barter or by distribution on the part of the chieftain of the respective group is hardly to be imagined.

A group pursuing the same occupation was of course not the only one allowed to pursue it, nor was their habitation limited to one special locality.

In other words, there were many groups which were engaged in the same occupation, and those groups had their residence in different provinces. It is not clear whether all the groups pursuing the same craft were under the jurisdiction of a common chieftain. The fact is certain, however, that many groups engaged in the same craft often had a common chieftain, notwithstanding their occupying different localities. The chieftain of a group was sometimes of the same blood as the members of the group, as in the case where the group consisted of homogenous immigrants. The chieftains of immigrant craft-groups, the number of which was very much limited in this country, belonged to this category. Sometimes, however, the chieftain of such a craft-group was not of the same stock as the members of the group under him, though the latter might be of homogenous blood. This was especially the case when a group was that of arms-bearers composed of Ainu or Haito. These valiant people were enlisted into a homogeneous company, but they were put under the direction of some trustworthy leader, who was of the same racial origin as the imperial family or who belonged to a race subjected to the imperial rule long before. Lastly, in the case where a group was a memorial institution, it is probable that the chieftain was nominated by the emperor without regard to his blood relationship to the members of the group under him.

Summing up what is stated above at length,

there were two kinds of seigneurs who were immediately under the sovereignty of the Emperor; the one was the landlord, and the other was the group-chieftain. It is a matter of course that the former was at the same time the chieftain of the serfs who peopled the land of which he was the lord, while the latter was the lord *de facto* of the land inhabited by himself and his clients, so that there was virtually very little difference between them. As regards their rights over the land and the people under their power it was equally absolute in both cases. The principal difference was that the right of the former rested essentially on his being the lord of the land, and that of the latter on his being the chieftain of the people. How did such a difference come into existence?

The fact that there were many landlords who were not of the same stock as the imperial family, might be regarded as a proof that they were descendants of the chiefs who held their lands prior to the coming over of the Japanese, or, more strictly, before the immigration of the predominant stock. They acquiesced afterwards in, or were subjected to, the rule of the Japanese, but the relation between the Emperor and these landlords was of a personal nature, and the right of the latter over their own land remained unchanged. Later on many members of the imperial family were sent out to explore new lands at the expense of the Ainu, and they generally installed themselves as masters of the land which they

had conquered. These new landlords assumed, as was natural, the same power as that which was possessed by the older landlords mentioned above. The power of the imperial family was thus extended into a wider sphere by the increase in the number of the landlords of the blood royal, but at the same time the power of the Emperor himself was in danger of being weakened by the overgrowth of the branches of the Imperial family.

As to the chieftains of groups, they must have been of later origin than the landlords, for to be a virtual possessor of land only as the consequence of being chieftain of the people who happened to occupy the land shows that the relation between the people and the land inhabited by them was the result of some historical development. Moreover, the grouping of people acording to their handicrafts must be a step far advanced beyond the pristine crowding together of people of promiscuous callings. It is also an important fact which should be taken into consideration here again that the greater part of the craft-groups consisted of immigrants. From all these data we may safely enough assume that the chieftains who were at first placed at the head of a certain group of people perhaps came over to this country simultaneously with the predominant stock, or came from the same home at a time not very far distant from that of the migration of the predominant stock itself, and that they distinguished themselves by their fidelity to the em-

peror; in short, these chieftains might have been mostly of the same racial origin as the imperial family, except in the case of groups formed by peninsular immigrants of later date. The increasing organisation of such groups, therefore, must have led to the aggrandizement of the power of the imperial family; but there was, of course, the same fear of a relaxation of the blood-ties between the emperor and the chieftains akin in blood to him.

Such are the general facts relating to the social and political life of Japan before the seventh century. If its development had continued on the lines described above, the ultimate result would have been the division of the country among a large number of petty chieftains, heterogenous in blood and in the nature of the power which they wielded, and with very relaxed ties between themselves and the emperor. We can observe a similar state of things even today among several uncivilised tribes, for example, among the natives of Formosa and in many South Sea Islands. Japan, however, was not destined to the same fate. How then did it come to be consolidated?

Centralisation presupposes a centre into which the surroundings may be centralised. This centre or nucleus for centralisation may be an individual or a corporate organism. As regards the latter, however, in order to become a nucleus of centralisation, it must be solidly organised, which is only possible in an advanced stage of civilisation.

For Japan in the period of which I am speaking, such a centre could create only a very loose centralisation, which could be broken asunder very easily. To have Japan strongly centralised, it was necessary for her to have an individual, that is to say the Emperor, as a nucleus of centralisation.

We have seen the process by which the predominant stock of the Japanese grew in power and influence, as well by exploring new lands and installing there men of their own stock as lords, as by organising more and more new groups out of the immigrants who came over to this country, and, perhaps, also out of a certain number of autochthons. Within the predominant stock itself the imperial family was no doubt the most influential. Most of the new landlords were recruited from the members of that family, and many memorial groups were instituted in their honour and for their sakes. Stretches of land which were exploited by these clients and on that account stood under the rule of the family increased gradually. Such an estate was called *miyake*, which meant a royal granary, a royal domain. The number of these domains constantly grew as time went on. Not only in the neighbourhood of the province of Yamato, in which the emperors of old time used to have their residence, but also in several distant provinces new *miyake* were organised. It is no wonder that they were more generally instituted in the western provinces,

especially in the coastal provinces of the Inland Sea and in the island of Kyushu rather than in other directions, because it was natural that the imperial house, which is said to have had its first foothold in the west, should have had a stronger influence in those parts than in provinces close to lands still retained by the Ainu and not yet occupied by the Japanese. Still it is a credit to the power of the imperial house that in the first half of the seventh century, we can already find such royal domains in the far eastern provinces of Suruga and Kôtsuke.

The method of increasing the *miyake* was not limited to the exploitation only of new ground previously uncultivated. Some of the chieftains were loyal enough to present to the emperor a part of their own dominions or a portion of their clients, with or without the lands inhabited by them. Confiscation, too, was a method often resorted to, when the crimes of some of the landlords, such as complicity in rebellion, insult to high personages of the imperial family, and so forth, merited forfeiture. Sometimes there were penitents who made presents of their lands or people, in order either not to lose or to regain the royal favour. In these sundry ways the imperial family was enabled to increase its domains to a very large extent, domains which, it should be noted, were cultivated mostly by groups of immigrant people, generally superintended by capable men of the same groups

who knew how to read, write and make up the accounts of the revenue.

This increase in number of *miyake* was in itself the increase of the wealth of the imperial family, and the increase of its power at the same time. It is a matter of course that such growth of the imperial family contributed largely to the increase of the imperial power itself, and was therefore a step toward centralisation. With a family as centre, however, a strong centralisation was impossible at a time when there was no definite regulation concerning the succession. The law of primogeniture had not yet been enacted. Princesses were not excluded from the order of succession. In such an age too strong a centralisation with the family as its inucleus, if it had been possible, could only have been a cause of constant internal feuds. The interests of certain members of the imperial family might have come into collision with those of the reigning Emperor, and indeed such clashes were not rare.

Besides this weakness which was like a running sore in the process of centralisation, there was another great drawback to the growth of the imperial power. This was the increase in power and influence of certain chieftains. At first there were many chieftains of nearly equal power, and as none among them was influential enough to lord it over all the others, it was not very difficult for the imperial family to avail itself of the rivalry that prevailed among them and to control them

accordingly. Some families among the chieftains, however, began to grow rich and powerful like the imperial family itself, while the greater part of them remained more or less stationary, so that a wide gap between the selected few and the rest as regards their influence became perceptible. Thus five conspicuous families, those of Ohtomo, Mononobe, Nakatomi, Abe, and Wani, first emerged from the numerous members of the chieftain class. The family of the Soga, which was descended from Takeshiuchi, the minister of the Empress Jingu, became afterwards very prominent, so that only two of the former five, namely, the Ohtomo and the Mononobe, could cope with it. Among the three which became prominent in place of the former five, the older two continued to be engaged exclusively in warlike business, while the third provided both ministers and generals. The magnitude of their influence in the latter half of the fifth century can be well imagined from the fact that the Emperor Yûryaku complained on his death bed that his vassals' private domains had become too extensive.

Such was the result which, it was natural to anticipate, was likely to accompany the growth of Japan under the rule of a predominant stock. It could not be said, however, to be very beneficial to the real consolidation of a coherent Empire. For a sovereign, even if he had had strength enough to exercise absolute rule, it must

have been far more difficult to govern a few powerful chieftains than to rule over many of lesser influence. It is needless to say that such must have been the case in an age when the relations of the reigning emperor and of the imperial family were not well organised in favour of the former. Many like examples may be cited from the early history of the Germans, especially from that of the Merovingian and the Carlovingian dynasties. Among the few prominent chieftains, a certain one family, *primus inter pares*, might become exceedingly powerful and then overshadow the rest. In Japan, too, there was not lacking a majordomo who was growing great at the cost of the imperial prerogative.

This tendency was too apparent not to be perceived by the sagacious emperors of succeeding ages. Increasing their material resources, therefore, was thought by them the best means of strengthening themselves and of guarding against the usurpation of their power by ambitious vassals. Long before the Korean expedition of the Empress Jingu, accordingly, the increase of the royal domains was assiduously aimed at. The Korean expedition itself may be considered as one of the evidences of the endeavour to develop the imperial power. For to lead an expedition oversea necessarily connotes a consolidated empire. War, however uncivilised the age in which it is carried on, must be, more than any other undertaking, a one man business. So we can not err

much in supposing that, at the time of the expedition, the centralisation of the country with the emperor as its nucleus was already in course of progress. Without being socially organised and consolidated, it would have been very hard to muster a people not yet sufficiently organised in a political sense. It was enacted just about this time, that all the royal granaries or domains which were situated in the province of Yamato, where successive royal residences had been established, should be the inalienable property of the reigning emperor himself, and that even the heir to the throne should not be allowed to own any of them. This enactment may be said to have been the beginning of the separation of the interests of the reigning emperor himself from those of the imperial family, and it has a great historical importance in the sense that the process of centralisation with an individual, and not a family, as its centre, was already in course of development.

To recapitulate my previous argument, in order to have a strongly organised Empire, first of all it was necessary at that time to put an end to the still growing power of the prominent chieftains, for the decrease in the number of chieftains only helped to make the remaining few stronger and more threatening. Secondly, not the imperial family but the reigning emperor himself must be made the nucleus of centralisation. This then was the necessity of our country and the goal of

the endeavours of succeeding emperors. What most accelerated this process of centralisation, however, was the introduction of Buddhism and the systematic adoption of Chinese civilisation, imported, not through the intermediation of the peninsular states, but directly from China herself. The former contributed by changing the spirit of the age, so that innovation could be undertaken without risking the total dissolution of the not yet sufficiently consolidated Empire, while the latter facilitated the organisation of the material resources already acquired, and paved the way for their further increase.

It is commonly stated that in 552 A.D., the thirteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Kimmei, Buddhism was first introduced into Japan, for that is the date of the first record of Buddhism in the imperial court. Owing to the researches of modern historians, however, that date is no longer accepted as the beginning of Buddhism in Japan. Buddhism, which is said to have been first introduced into China in the middle of the first century after Christ, began to flow into the Korean peninsula some three hundred years later. Among the three peninsular states, the first which received the new religion was Korea or Kokuri, which was the nearest to China. The Korean chronicle says that in 364 A.D. Fu-Chien, a powerful potentate of the Chin dynasty, which existed in northern China at that time, sent an ambassador to Korea, accompanied by a Bud-

dhist priest. Twelve years later than Korea, Kutara received Buddhism from southern China. Shiragi was the latest of the three to accept the new religion, for it was not until 527 A.D. that Buddhism was recognized in that state. Perhaps, however, the people of Shiragi had been acquainted with it at an earlier epoch, though it would not be surprising if this had not been the case. The geographical position of Shiragi obliged it for long to be the last state in the peninsula to receive Chinese civilisation. It is not the Buddhism of Shiragi, therefore, but that of Korea and Kutara which had to do with the history of our country.

At that time, in the southern part of the peninsula, there were many minor semi-independent communities under the tutelage of Japan. A resident-general was sent from Japan to whom the affairs of the protectorate were entrusted. Though the existence in the peninsula of a region subject directly to the Emperor of Japan, that is to say, the extension oversea of the Japanese dominion, is not certified to by any written evidence, the history of the early relations between Japan and the peninsula cannot be adequately explained, unless we assume that this imperial domain on the continent was the stronghold of Japanese influence over the peninsula, around which the minor states clustered as their centre. Kutara, which divided the sphere of Japanese influence from Korea, had been suffering much from

the encroachment of the Koreans on the north. To counteract Korea, which allied herself with the successive dynasties in northern China, Kutara tried to court the favour of the states which came successively into existence in southern China. That Buddhism in Kutara was propagated by priests from China meridional may account for the intercourse which grew up between the peninsular state and the south of China. Still, however much Kutara might have desired assistance from that quarter, the distance was too great for it to have obtained any efficient relief, even if the southern Chinese had wished to afford it, so that Kutara was at last compelled to apply for help to Japan, which was the real master of the land bordering it on the south. This is the reason why soon after the expedition of the Empress Jingu, Kutara initiated a very intimate intercourse with our country. From that state princes of the blood were sent as hostages to Japan one after another, an unruly minister of that state was summoned to justify himself before an Emperor of Japan, a topographical survey of Kutara was undertaken by Japanese officials, and reinforcements were despatched thither several times from our country. After all, Japan was not the losing party in her peninsular relations. The knowledge of the Chinese classics was the most important boon the intercourse conferred on our country. Not less important was the introduction of Buddhism.

The doubt, however, remains whether Bud-

dhism, which began to flow into Kutara in 376 A.D., could have remained so long confined in that state as not to have been introduced into Japan till 552 A.D., notwithstanding the intimate relations between the two countries. The worship of Buddha must have been practised at an earlier period, most probably in private, by immigrants from the peninsular state, who had already imbibed the rudiments of the new religion in their original home. Moreover, in speaking of the propagation of Buddhism in Japan, we must look back into the history of our intercourse with southern China.

In the preceding chapter I mentioned the description of our country given in the *San-kuo-chih*. There we are told that intercourse was carried on between Japan and northern China through the Chinese provinces in the peninsula. It was the two peninsular states arising out of the ruin of these Chinese provinces which paved the way for the intercourse of Japan with southern China. Not only did we obtain through Kutara knowledge about southern China under the dynasty of the East Chin, but the first Japanese ambassadors sent thither at the beginning of the fifth century could reach their destination only through the intermediation of Korea or Kokuri, which furnished our ambassadors with guides. After that there were frequent goings to and fro of the people of China and Japan, notwithstanding the rapidly succeeding changes of dynasty in southern

China. It was through the intercourse thus initiated that several kinds of industry, more especially weaving, were introduced into Japan from southern China, and had a very deep and enduring effect on the history of our country. There were immigrants, too, from southern China into Japan, and among them, some were so pious as to build temples in the districts in which they settled, and to practise the cult of Buddha, which they had brought with them from their homes. Ssuma-Tateng of the Liang dynasty, who came over to Japan in 522 A.D., is one of the outstanding examples. Such was the history of Buddhism in Japan before the memorable thirteenth year of the Emperor Kimmei. The event which happened in that year, therefore, has an importance only on account of the pompous presentation by Kutara of Buddhist images and sutras to our imperial court.

Who, then, first countenanced, patronised, and was converted to the newly imported religion? Naturally the progressives of that age, among whom the Soga were the foremost. Unlike the two other conspicuous families of Ohtomo and Mononobe, who served exclusively as military lords, the family of Soga supplied not only the military, but the civil and dimplomatic services also. This naturally gave them very frequent access to the imported civilisation in contrast to the simple soldiers, who are generally prone to be more conservative than civil officials. As the

chief administrator and chief treasurer, the Soga family could not dispense with the employment of secretaries, whose posts were monopolised at that time by groups of immigrant scribes. In this way the immigrants from the peninsula, afterwards reinforced by those coming direct from southern China, flocked to the palace of the Soga family, and they worked naturally for the increase of the power of their patron. In short, a large number of men, furnished with more literary education than the ordinary Japanese of the time, became the clients of the family.

Of the two rivals of the Soga family, that which was the first to decline in power was the Ohtomo. The next to decay was the family of the Mononobe. The fall of the rivals of the Soga must be attributed to the growth of the latter family, which owed much to the help given by the immigrants mentioned above. And as the introducers of Buddhism were to be found among these immigrants, it was very natural that the family of Soga should be among the first to be converted to the new religion. Thus the aggrandisement of the Soga family, the propagation of Buddhism which it patronised, and the progress of civilisation in general went on hand in hand. In the middle of the sixth century, that is to say, in the reign of the Emperor Kimmei, Iname was the head of the Soga family. In his time the Mononobe family could still hold its own against him, though at some disadvantage. When, how-

ever, Umako, the son of Iname, succeded his father, he was at last able to overthrow the power of his antagonist Moriya of the Mononobe, after defeating and killing him in battle, with the aid of the prince Shôtoku, who was also a devotee of the new religion.

Thus in the course of several hundred years the gradual process of centralisation had been slowly drawing to its goal. In the beginning of the seventh century at last, the noted families of old were all eclipsed by the single family of the Soga, which towered alone in wealth and power above the others. At the same time instead of having the imperial house as the nucleus of centralisation, the Emperor began to tower high above the other members of his family. He was the owner of a very vast domain and of a multitude of people of various classes. He was the head of the ancestral cult. The sacred emblem of his divine origin, which had formerly been kept in the imperial camp, was now removed from the palace for fear of profanation, and taken to its present resting-place in the province of Ise. Yet the removal did more to increase than to lessen the sanctity of his person. On the other hand, his authority was in danger of being usurped by the all-powerful mayor of the palace, the family of Soga, which had become too strong for the emperor easily to manage. The times became very critical. In order to push still further the process of centralisation which had been going on, and to

make the empire better conslidated, some decisive stroke was necessary. And the revolutionary change was at last accelerated by the overgrown power of the Soga family, the opening of regular intercourse with China, and above all the strong necessity within and without to consolidate the empire more and more.

CHAPTER V

REMODELING OF THE STATE

JAPAN stood on the verge of a crisis, and it was saved from catastrophe by two causes. First, by the ceaseless importation of high Chinese civilisation, which steadily encouraged the political concentration; secondly, by the necessity of centralisation so as to push on vigorously the attack on the still powerful Ainu.

As I have mentioned several times before, the Ainu had been a losing party in the racial struggle with the Japanese, yet their resistance had been a very stubborn one, so that at the end of the sixth century they could still hold their ground against the Japanese on the southern boundary of the present provinces of Iwaki and Iwashiro, which roughly corresponds to latitude 37° N. The northern part of Japan, therefore, was still in constant danger of incursions by the hairy race. For a country in the infant stage of consolidation, as Japan was at that time, it was by no means an easy task to ward off the frequent inroads of that race, and at the same time to continue the process of the inner organisation of the state. One would perhaps wonder at my conclusion, starting from

the consideration that the Ainu scare was not such a fearful thing as to influence the natural growth of a state formed by the stronger race. This misconception arises from the ignorance of the fact that the famous dictum "delenda est Carthago" was only pronounced after the first Punic war. Necessity by itself does not create the desire to secure what is necessary. The desire to attain any aim first comes into consciousness when one begins to feel strong enough to venture to attain it. When the Ainu was very powerful, the Japanese had to contend with them mainly in order to secure a foothold against them. It was none the less necessary for the Japanese to continue to struggle with the Ainu, when the former became strong enough to face the antagonist evenhanded. Lastly, the time arrived now when it became an urgent necessity for the Japanese to crush the Ainu, in order to achieve undisturbed a full political organisation in the domain within the four seas. In short, when the Japanese became so convinced of their might that they could not tolerate any rival within the principal islands, they found it even more indispensable to organise themselves as compactly as possible under one strong supreme head than ever before.

What most facilitated the centralisation under the imperial rule was of course the imported Chinese civilisation. To say sooth, several centuries of the slow infiltration of that high civilisation had already attained a great deal of influence,

but it was rather a smuggled, and not a really legalised importation. Moreover, China herself, the source from which the civilisation had to be imported, had been dismembered for a long time, so that until 581 A.D. the country could hardly be called a unified state at all. How could we expect to find in a country where no order ruled a model suitable to be employed as exemplar to effect a durable political reform. It is not strange, therefore, that, notwithstanding the long years of intercourse between the two countries, only a very slight change had been thereby occasioned in our country as regards our political organisation. Any change which was wrought in our political sphere by Chinese influence was effected in a very indirect way, having worked its way through multifarious social changes caused by the contact with the high alien civilisation. No direct political clue could be followed up from China to this country. To achieve the purpose of borrowing from China the necessary materials for the reconstruction of political Japan, we had to wait longer, that is to say, till the inauguration of regular intercourse between this country and China also politically unified and concentrated.

That memorable year came at last. In 607 A.D. Ono-no-Imoko was despatched as official envoy to China, which at that time was under the second emperor of the dynasty of Sui. Even before this date, however, since the accession of the Empress Suiko, as the result of the busy inter-

course between us and the peninsular states, various arts and useful sciences of Chinese origin had been introduced into this country, among which astronomy, the oldest perhaps of all sciences everywhere in the world, was the most noteworthy. Connected with this science, the art of calendar-making was introduced for the first time into Japan. It would be a gross mistake, if we thereby conclude that we had no means of defining the dates of events prior to this introduction. Although we could not by ourselves make an independent calendarial system, yet the Japanese, at least the naturalised scribes, had already been acquainted with two chronological methods. The one was to define a date by counting from the year of the accession of a reigning emperor. The other method was that which had prevailed long since in China, that is to say, to define a date by counting according to the cyclical order of the twelve zodiacal signs, interlaced with the cyclical order of ten attributes, so that to complete one cycle sixty years were necessary. Some groups of scribes, perhaps, pursued the former method, while others favoured the latter. Contradictory statements and evident repetitions abundantly found in the *Nihongi* were thus occasioned by the existence of historical materials, dated according to two different chronological systems. For the compilers of the famous chronicle sometimes mistook one and the same event found in different sources and given in two different chronological

systems, for two independent events resembling each other only in certain superficial respects. Otherwise they misunderstood two entirely distinct events having the same cyclical designation in date as a single occurrence, narrated in two different ways, ignoring the fact that there might have been two like events which happened at a chronological distance of sixty years or some multiple of that cycle of time. Confusion of this kind was unavoidable in ages where there was no established method of defining a historical date. It was a great gain, therefore, that astronomy and the art of calendar-making chanced to be introduced in 602 A.D., the tenth year of the reign of the Empress.

Another not less important boon which we received from China through the peninsular states was the gradation of official ranks. Anterior to this period we had something like a hierarchical system with the emperor as the political and social supreme, but the system, if it could be called such, was nothing but a chain of vassalship fastened very loosely. It was far from a well-ordered gradation, which is in reality the beginning of equalisation and could only be effected by a very strong hand. The dignity of the emperor could be excellently upheld by having under him gradated subjects, but the gradation itself did not hinder those subjects from thinking that they were equals before the emperor as his subjects. This gradation came into practice in the year 604 A.D.

In the same year the famous "Seventeen Articles" was also promulgated. This was a collection of moral maxims imparted to all subjects, especially to administrative officials, as instructions. The principle pervading the articles unmistakably betrays that much of it was borrowed from Chinese moral and political precepts. The only exception is the second article, which encouraged the worship of Buddha. It was natural that such articles should be decreed by Prince Shôtoku, who was under the tutorship of a Korean priest and a naturalised peninsular savant.

Having so far adopted the elements of Chinese civilisation secondhand through the peninsular states, we could savour the taste of refinement enjoyed by the then highly advanced nation on the continent, embellish thereby life in the court and in high circles, and promote not a little our political centralisation. We were thus put in the state of one whose thirst becomes much aggravated after taking a sip of water. At the helm of the state was a very intelligent personage, Prince Shôtoku, nephew and son-in-law of the Empress and heir-presumptive to the throne. It was natural for him and the progressive minister, Umako of the Soga, to crave for more of the Chinese knowledge and enlightenment. The peninsular states, which were never very far advanced in civilisation, had transmitted to us all that they could teach. There was little left in which those states were in advance of us. Then

where should we turn to obtain more learning and more culture except to China herself?

Diplomatic considerations were also an inducement for us to be drawn towards China more closely than before. Just at this time we were gradually losing our ground in the peninsula as the result of the constant incursions of ascendant Shiragi into the Japanese protectorate, and of the perfidious policy of Kutara, which feigned to be our ally only for the sake of playing a dubious game against her neighbours, and paid more respect to China than she did toward Japan. Kokuri in the north, the strongest of the three peninsular states and the danger to waning Kutara, was just, at a critical time, menaced by China under the quite recently established dynasty of Sui. No wonder that Japan wished to know more about China, the country with which we had been already communicating directly as well as indirectly, though very sporadically. An envoy to China was the natural consequence.

Yang-ti, the second Emperor of the Sui dynasty was very ambitious and enterprising. His invasion of Kokuri, though it collapsed in utter failure, was conducted on such a grand scale that it reminds us of the Persian invasion of Greece under Xerxes, described by Herodotus. This Yang-ti was much flattered at receiving an envoy from the island far beyond the sea. Perhaps he rejoiced the more at finding an ally in the rear of Kokuri, which he was then intending to invade. So he received the

Japanese envoy quite cordially, and on the latter's homeward journey the Emperor ordered a courtier to escort the envoy to Japan. This escort was on his return to China accompanied by the same envoy whom he had escorted hither. Ono-no-Imoko, who was thus twice sent to China as envoy, must have seen much of that country, and probably fetched many articles to delight the eyes of the Japanese of the higher classes, who were enraptured with everything foreign. What was the most important event connected with the second despatch of the envoy, however, was the sending abroad with him of students to study Buddhist tenets and also to receive secular education in China. They stayed in that country for a very long while, far longer than those who have been sent abroad by the Japanese government in recent years have been accustomed to stay in Europe and America, so that they lived in China as if they were real Chinese themselves, and were deeply imbued with Chinese thoughts and ideas. Two of the eight students who accompanied Ono-no-Imoko to China, returned to this country after a sojourn of more than thirty years, during which they witnessed a change of dynasty, and the rise of the T'ang, the dynasty in which Chinese civilisation reached its apogee. One of the two students who returned quite a Chinese to Japan, happened to become a tutor of a prince who afterwards ascended the throne as the Emperor Tenchi, the great reformer. By

the way, it should be noticed that all of the eight students despatched were men of Chinese origin without exception, being naturalised scribes or their descendants.

The peninsular states became rather jealous of our direct intercourse with China, for they could not at least help fearing that thenceforth they would not be able to play off China and Japan against each other as they had done up to that time. They, therefore, tried to flatter us by sending to this country envoys more frequently than before. It was at one of these ceremonial court receptions of an envoy from Kokuri, that Soga-no-Iruka, the son of Yemishi of the Soga and the grandson of Umako, was killed by the Prince Naka-no-Ôye, afterwards the Emperor Tenchi, and by Nakatomi-no-Kamako, afterwards Kamatari. The father of Iruka soon followed his son's fate, and with him the main branch of the quondam all-powerful family of the Soga came to an end.

The fall of the house of the Soga may be ascribed to several causes. In the first place, it became an absolute necessity for the growth of the imperial power to get rid of the too arrogant Soga ministers, because to bear with them any longer would have endangered the imperial prestige itself. Secondly, as soon as the family of the Soga had ceased to fear its rivals, it began to be divided within itself by internal strife. Lastly, a quarrel about the imperial succession

brought about the interweaving of the above two causes. The Prince Naka-no-Ôye, being the eldest son of the Emperor Jomei, was naturally one of the candidates to the throne. As his mother, however, was the Empress Kôkyoku, and therefore not of the Soga blood, the Prince was in fear lest he should be put aside from the order of the succession. Besides, he was very much enraged at the overbearing attitude of Yemishi and his son. The Nakatomi family to which Kamatari belonged was one of the five old illustrious names, and had been chiefly engaged in religious affairs. Kamatari deeply deplored the fact that his family had long been overshadowed by that of the Soga. Being qualified as a capable statesman, he foresaw the political danger to which Japan was exposed at that time. The lateral branches of the Soga family, actuated perhaps by jealousy against the main branch, joined the Prince and Kamatari in annihilating the far too overgrown power which threatened the imperial prerogative. Japan thus safely passed this political crisis. The next task was the thorough reconstruction of the social and political organisations, and the establishment of a uniform system throughout the whole Empire.

A series of grand reforms was inaugurated in the year 645 A.D. in the name of the reigning Emperor Kôtoku, who was one of the uncles of the Prince on his mother's side, and ascended the throne as the result of wise self-denial on the part

of the Prince. The first reform was the initiation of the period name, a custom which, in China, had been in vogue since the Han dynasty. The period name which was adopted at first in Japan in the reign of the Emperor was Tai-Kwa. This Chinese usage, after it was once introduced into our country, has been continued until today, though with a few short interruptions.

The next step in the reform was the nomination of governors for the eastern provinces. Before this time we had already provincial governors installed in regions under the direct imperial sway, that is to say, in provinces where imperial domains abounded and imperial residences were located. These provincial governors depended wholly on the imperial power, and could at any time be recalled at the Emperor's pleasure. That such governors were now installed in the far eastern provinces bordering on the Ainu territory shows that, as these provinces were newly established ones, it was easier to enforce the reform there than in older provinces, in which time-honoured customs had taken deep root and chieftains ruled almost absolutely, so that even those radical reformers hesitated for a moment to try their hand on them.

The change, in the same year, of the imperial residence to the province of Settsu, near the site where the great commercial city of Ôsaka now stands, was also one of the very remarkable events. Imperial residences of the older times

had been shifted here and there according to the change of the reigning emperor. No one of them, however, as far back as the time of Jimmu, the first Emperor, seems to have been located out of the provinces of Yamato, except the dwelling-place of the Emperor Nintoku. The removal of the imperial residence in 645 A.D. to the province of Settsu, where facilities for foreign intercourse could be secured, signifies that the imperial house was turning its gaze toward the west, with eyes more widely open than before.

The second year of the reform began with far more radical innovations than the first, that is to say, the abolishment of the group-system and of the holding of lands by landlords. All the lands privately held by local lords and all the people subjected to group-chieftains were decreed to be henceforth public and free and subject only to the Emperor. The designation of local lords and group-chieftains were allowed to be kept by those who had formerly possessed them, but only as mere titles. In order to allow this reform to run smoothly, the Prince Naka-no-Ôye himself set the example by renouncing, in behalf of the reigning Emperor, his right over his clients numbering five hundred twenty four and his private domain consisting of one hundred eighty-one lots.

In lands thus made public, provinces were established, and governors were appointed. Under those governors served the former local lords and group-chieftains as secretaries of various official

grades or as district governors, all salaried, paid in natural products, of course, since no currency existed at that time. In every province, a census was ordered to be taken, and arable lands were distributed according to the number of persons in a family, with variations with respect to their ages and sexes. The distribution had to be renewed after the lapse of a certain number of years, paralleled to the renewal of the census. The tax in rice was to be levied commensurate with the area of the lot of land distributed. Additional taxes in silk, flax, or cotton were to be paid both per family and according to the area of the distributed lot. Corvée was also imposed, and any one who did not serve in person was obliged to pay, in rice and textiles for a substitute. Besides these imposts, there were many circumstantial regulations concerning the tribute in horses, equipment of soldiers, use of post-horses, interment of the dead of various ranks, and so forth. These laws and regulations taken together are called the Ohmi laws, from the name of the province into which the Emperor Tenchi had removed his residence.

For three-score years after the promulgation of the reform of Taikwa, there were many fluctuations, sometimes reactionary and sometimes progressive, and many additions and amendments were made to the first enactments published. In general, however, they remained unchanged, and were at last systematized and codified in the sec-

ond year of the era of Taïhô, that is to say, in 702 A.D. This is what the Japanese historians designate by the name of the Tai-hô Code.

After an impartial comparison of this code with the elaborate legislation of the T'ang dynasty, one cannot deny that the former was mainly a minute imitation of the latter. Preambles and epilogues issued at the time of the first proclamation were taken from passages of the Chinese classics, and there are many phrases in the text itself which plainly betray their Chinese origin. Many regulations were inserted, not on account of their necessity in this country, but only because they were found in the legislation of the T'ang dynasty.

There are of course not a few modifications, which can be discerned when carefully scrutinised, and these modifications are generally to be found in those Chinese laws which were impossible of introduction into our country without change. Some of them, having been planned originally in the largest Empire of the world and in an age as highly civilised as that of the T'ang, were too grand in scale, so that they had to be minimised in order to suit the condition of the island realm. Others had too much of the racial traits of the Chinese to be put at once in operation in a country such as Japan, which on its part had also sundry peculiarities not to be easily displaced by legislation originated in an alien soil. This was especially the case with respect to religious mat-

ters. Though it is a question whether Shintoism may be called a religion in the modern scientific sense, it cannot be disputed that it has a strong religious element in it. On that account, it had proved a great obstacle to the propagation of Buddhism, which was the religion embraced at first not by the common people but by men belonging to the upper classes, so that the latter, while earnestly encouraging the inculcation of Buddhism, were obliged to show themselves not altogether indifferent to the old deities. In behalf of the Shinto cult, special dignitaries were appointed, the chief of whom played the same part as the Pontifex Maximus of ancient Rome. Such an institution is purely Japanese and was not to be found in the Chinese model. Apart from these exceptions, however, the reform of the Tai-kwa era was essentially a Japanese imitation of a Chinese original.

What was the result, then, of the reform undertaken partly from national necessity, but partly also from love of imitation? Let me begin with the bright side first.

Whatever be the intrinsic merit of the reform itself, there is no doubt that the reform came from necessity. It was absolutely necessary that Japan, in order to make solid progress, should be centralised politically. The model which the reformers selected was the legislation of a strongly centralised monarchy. In this respect at least it admirably fitted the necessity of Japan at

that time. In the year 659, fifteen years after the promulgation of the reform, an organised expedition consisting of a large number of squadrons, was despatched along the coast of the Sea of Japan as far north as the island now called by the name of Hokkaido. In the next year another expedition was sent across the sea to the continental coast, perhaps to the region at the mouth of the Amur. Though the frontier line on the main island was not pushed forward against the Ainu so rapidly as the progress along the western coast, owing to the obstinate resistance of the tribe on the eastern coast, yet the victory was wholly on the side of the Japanese. The removal of the imperial residence by the Emperor Tenchi in the year 667 to the side of lake Biwa, in the province of Ohmi, marks an epoch in the progress of the exploration north-easternward. For the new site, a little distant from the modern town of Ohtsu, is more conveniently situated than the former residences, not only in guarding and pushing the north-eastern frontier, but in keeping connection with the navigation on the Sea of Japan. The inland lake of Biwa, though not large in area, is one which must be counted as something in a country as small as Japan. Until quite recent times, communication between Kyoto, the former capital, and Hokkaido and the northern provinces of Hon-to was maintained, not along the eastern or Pacific shore, but via the Lake and the Sea of Japan. Even the eastern coast of the province of

Mutsu seems to have had no direct communication by sea with the centre of the Empire. In order to reach there from the capital, men in old times were obliged to take generally a long roundabout way along the western coast, pass the Strait of Tsugaru, and then turn southward along the Pacific coast. This important highway of the sea route of old Japan was connected with Kyoto by the navigation across lake Biwa. The change of the imperial residence to the neighborhood of Ohtsu, which is the key of the lake navigation routes, had no doubt a great historic significance.

Another remarkable event which contributed much to the remodelling of the state was the total overthrow of the Japanese influence in the Korean peninsula. About the middle of the sixth century Mimana was taken by Shiragi, and with it our prestige in the peninsula suffered a severe loss. Still for some time there remained to Japan a shadow of influence in the existence of the state of Kutara, though the latter was very unreliable as an ally. That state then began to be hard pressed by Shiragi and asked for our help. More than once we sent reinforcements, sometimes numbering more than twenty thousand soldiers. Arms and provisions were also freely given. Owing to the incompetence of the Japanese generals despatched, however, and the perfidious policy of Kutara, our assistance proved ineffective. As a counter to our assistance to Kutara, Shiragi invoked the aid of the T'ang dynasty, which was

eager to establish its rule over the peninsula. In the year 650 Kutara was at last destroyed by the co-operation of the army of Shiragi and the navy of the T'ang. Next it was the turn of Kokuri to be invaded by the T'ang army. A Japanese army consisting of more than ten thousand men was sent in order to restore Kutara and to succour Kokuri. In 663 a great naval battle was fought between the Chinese squadrons and ours, ending in the defeat of the latter, for the former, consisting of 170 ships, far outnumbered the Japanese. With this defeat our hope of the restoration of Kutara was finally lost. The remnants of the royal family of Kutara and of the people of that state numbering more than three thousand immigrated into Japan. Kokuri, too, surrendered soon afterwards to the T'ang in 668, and long before this Shiragi had become a tributary state of China. The influence of the T'ang dynasty prevailed over the whole peninsula.

Since this time we were reduced to defending our interest, not on the Korean peninsula, but by fortifying the islands of Tsushima and Iki and the northern coast of Kyushu. There was no breach of the peace, however, between Japan and China after the naval battle of the year 663, for after the downfall of Kutara we had no imperative necessity to despatch our army abroad, and therefore no occasion to come into collision with the Chinese army in the peninsula. China, on her part, did not wish to make us her enemy.

The rough sea dividing the two countries made it a very hazardous task to try to invade us, even for the emperors of the Great T'ang. A Chinese general who had the duty of governing the former dominion of Kutara sent embassies several times to Japan. At one time an embassy was accompanied by two thousand soldiers as retinue, but the purpose was plainly demonstrative. We also continued to send embassies to China. Peace was thus restored on our western frontier, though under conditions somewhat detrimental to our national honour.

The evacuation of the peninsula was a great respite to our national energy, howsoever it be regretted. First of all, Japan was not yet a match for China of the T'ang. Moreover, to keep up our prestige on the peninsula was too costly a matter for us, even if we had been able to sustain it, and by this evacuation we were saved from squandering the national resources which were not yet at their full. After all, for Japan at that time the urgent necessity lay not in geographical expansion abroad, and affairs on the peninsula were of far less importance when compared with driving the Ainu out of Hon-to. Against an enemy coming from the west, we could defend ourselves without much difficulty, the rough sea being a strong bulwark. It is quite another kind of matter to divide the Hon-to with the Ainu for long. Japan wanted a geographical expansion not without, but within.

The development of political consolidation received also much benefit from our renunciation on the west. Our national progress, and therefore our political concentration, got a great stimulus in the intercourse with the peninsula. If we had, however, meddled with peninsular affairs too long, we would not have been able to turn our attention exclusively to inner affairs. The reform laws had just been published, and they required time to be thoroughly assimilated. Unless amended and supplemented according to practical needs, those laws would be mere black on white, or sources of social confusion. Absolutely and without question we were in need of peace, and that peace was obtained by the evacuation. By this peace the reform legislation could work at its best possible. If it had not enhanced the merit of the new legislation, at least it developed the benefit of the reform to the full, and prevented much evil which might have arisen if it had been otherwise.

On the other hand, the dark side of the reform legislation must not be overlooked. In reality the Chinese civilisation of the T'ang dynasty was one too highly advanced to be successfully copied by Japan, a country which was just in its teens, so to speak, so far as development was concerned. As a rule, the codification of laws in any country denotes a stage in the progress of the civilisation of that country, where it became necessary to turn back and to systematise what had already been

attained. In other words, codification is everywhere a retrospective action, and before it be taken up, the civilisation of that particular country should have reached a stage considered the highest possible by the people of that period. Otherwise it can do only harm. When the codification is far ahead of the civilisation the country possesses, then that nation will be obliged to take very hurried steps in order to overtake the stage where the codification stands. It is during these headlong marches that the dislocation of the social and political structure of a state generally takes place. In short, it may be called a national precocity, highly dangerous to a healthy development. The legislation of the T'ang dynasty, in truth, was even for China of that age too much enlightened, idealistic, and circumstantial to be worked with real profit to the state. It was, however, her own creation, while ours was an imitation. It would have been a miracle if Japan could have reaped the full harvest expected by a legislation nearly as advanced and as elaborate as that of the T'ang.

The above remark is especially true as regards the military system. The dynasty of the T'ang was in its beginning a strong military power. Its military system was not bad, so long as it was worked by very strong hands. On the whole, however, the political régime of the dynasty was not such a one as to favour the keeping up of a martial spirit. After the subjugation of the un-

civilised tribes surrounding the empire, the martial spirit of the Chinese nation soon relaxed, and the country fell a prey to the invading barbarians whom the Chinese were accustomed to despise. We find in it the exact counterpart of the Roman Empire destroyed by the Germans. For the T'ang dynasty, it had been better to conserve the military spirit a little longer in order to protect the civilisation which it had brought to its zenith.

With stronger reasons, the need of a martial spirit ought to have been emphasised for Japan at that time. The Japanese military ordinance of the reform was modelled after the Chinese system, but of course on a smaller scale. The chief fault, however, was its over-circumstantiality, being even more circumstantial for Japan of that time than the original system was for China herself. Before the reform we had several bands of professional soldiers, which could be easily mobilised. That old system had gone. We had still to fight constantly against the Ainu. Nay, the warfare on that quarter was taken up with renewed activity, and we had to educate, to train the people who were not at all accustomed to military discipline. Having adopted a system resembling conscription, we were always in need of an accurate census. To have an accurate census taken is a very difficult matter even for a highly civilised nation. It must have been especially so for Japan. In the reformed legislation the census was the basis both for the mili-

tary service and the land-distribution, taxation connected with it. The land distribution system, though there might have been some like element in the original custom of Japan, was yet on the whole another Chinese institution imitated, very circumstantially again. Moreover, though this reform seems to have been enforced throughout all the provinces at once, except the southernmost two, Ohsumi and Satsuma, in most of the provinces the part of the arable land brought under the new system must have been very limited. Perhaps only such land in the neighborhood of each provincial capital might have been distributed regularly. Added to that, the growth of the population and the increase of arable land necessitated a change in the distribution, and in the said legislation a redistribution every six years was provided for that change. In order to carry out this redistribution regularly and adequately a very strong government and wise management were needed. Otherwise either the system would be frustrated, or there would be no improvement of land.

Considered from the side of the people, the new legislation was not welcomed in all ways. New taxes are generally wont to be felt heavier than the accustomed ones. Besides these fresh imposts, military service was demanded, which was quite a novel thing to most of them. In fact, their burden must have been pretty heavy, for they could not enjoy a durable peace at all, on

account of the interminable warfare against the Ainu. Many began to lead a roaming life, others avoided legal registration in order to escape from taxation and military service. Before long the fundamental principle of the grand reform collapsed, and a very expensive governmental system remained, which, too, gradually became difficult to be kept up. A change of régime seemed unavoidable.

CHAPTER VI

CULMINATION OF THE NEW RÉGIME; STAGNATION; RISE OF THE MILITARY RÉGIME

WHATEVER be the merit or the demerit of the reform of the Taikwa, it was after all an honour to the Japanese nation that our ancestors ever undertook this reform. Not only because they were able to provide thereby for the needs of the state of that time, but because they were bold enough, temerarious almost, to aspire to imitate the elaborate system of the highly civilised T'ang. When an uncivilised people comes into contact with one highly civilised, it is needless to say that the former is generally induced to imitate the latter. This imitation is sometimes of a low order, that is to say, it often verges on mimicry, and not infrequently results in the dwindling of racial energy on the part of the imitator. Very seldom does the imitation go so far as to adopt the political institutions of the superior. If they, however, had ventured impetuously to do so, the result would have been still worse, while in the case of Japan as the imitator of China, it was quite otherwise. At first sight, as China of the T'ang was so incomparably far ahead of Japan of that

time, it might seem rather foolish of our forefathers to try straightway to imitate her. Moreover, on the whole, the imitation ended in a failure indeed, as should have been expected. But the original institutions of the T'ang itself proved a failure in their own home; hence, had the imitation of those institutions resulted in a success with us, it would have aroused a great astonishment. The very fact that our forefathers dared to imitate China, and did not thereby end in losing spirit and energy, is in itself a great credit to the reputation of the Japanese as a nation, for it testifies that they have been from the first a very aspiring nation, unwitting how to shirk a difficulty. If it be an honour to the Germans not to have withered before the high civilisation of the Romans, the same glory may be accorded to the Japanese also.

This aspiring spirit of the nation not only made itself felt in the importation of Chinese legislation, but also in adopting her arts and literature. As to arts, it is difficult to ascertain to what degree of accomplishment our forefathers had already attained before they came under continental influence. Most probably it was limited to some simple designs drawn on household utensils, *haniwa* or terracotta-making, and to an orchestra of rudimentary instruments. In what may be regarded as literature, there were ballads, some of which are cited in the *Nihongi*. Tales of heroic deeds, however, used to be transmitted from gen-

eration to generation, not in the form of poetry, that is, not in epic, but in oral prose narrations. In this respect the ancient Japanese fell far short of the Ainu, who had developed a highly epic talent very early. To summarise, the ancient Japanese apparently showed very few indications of excelling other peoples in the same stage of civilisation as regards arts and literature.

In the history of Japanese art, the introduction of Buddhism is a noteworthy event. For, along with it, works of Chinese painting and sculpture, both pertaining mainly to Buddhist worship, were sent as presents to our imperial court by rulers of the peninsular states. Not only articles of virtu, but also artists themselves, were sent over to this country from the continent, who displayed their skill in building temples, making images, decorating shrines with fresco paintings, and so forth. Instructed by them, some gifted Japanese, too, became enabled to develop themselves in several branches of art and artistic industry. Among the plastic arts, painting was very slow in making progress, though a few examples of that age which have remained to this day are very similar in style to those pictures and frescoes recently excavated out of the desert in northwestern China, and have a high historical value, giving us a glimpse of the T'ang painting. Architecture was perhaps the art most patronised by the court. We can see it in the construction of numerous palaces. It is a well known fact that before the Empress Gem-

myo, who was one of the daughters of the Emperor Tenchi and ascended the throne next after the Emperor Mommu, each successive emperor established his court at the place he liked, and the residence of the previous emperor was generally abandoned by the next-comer. From this fact we can imagine that all imperial palaces of those times, if they could be named palaces at all, must have been very simply built and not very imposing. The locality, too, where the residence was established, was hardly apt to be called a metropolitan city, although it might have served sufficiently as a political centre of the time. It was in the third year of the said empress, 710 A.D., that Nara was first selected as the new capital which was to be established in permanence, contrary to the hitherto accepted usage, and in fact it remained the country's chief city for more than eighty years. For the first time a plan of the city was drawn, a plan very much like a checkerboard, having been modelled after the contemporary Chinese metropolis. The architectural style of the new palaces was also an imitation of that which then prevailed in China. The only difference was that wood was widely used here instead of brick, which was already the chief building material in China. Nobles were encouraged by the court to build tiled houses in place of thatched. Tiles began to come into use about that time, and not for roofing only, but for flooring also. hough the checkerboard plan of the metropoli-

tan city of Nara might never have been realised in full detail, and though among those palaces once built very few could escape the frequent fires and gradual decay, yet judging from those very few which have fortunately survived to this day, we may fairly imagine that they must have been grandiose in proportion to the general condition of the age. What gives the best clue to the social life of the higher classes of that time is the famous imperial treasury, Shô-sô-in, at Nara, now opened to a few specially honoured persons every autumn, when the air is very agreeably dry in Japan. The treasury contains various articles of daily and ceremonial use bequeathed by the Emperor Shômu, who was the eldest son of the Emperor Mommu and died in 749 A.D. after a reign of twenty-five years. Being so multifarious in their kinds, and having been wonderfully well preserved in a wooden storehouse, these imperial treasures, if taken together with numerous contemporary documents extant today, enable us to give a clear and accurate picture of the social life of that time.

As *tatami* matting was not yet known, and the houses occupied by men of high circles had their floors generally tiled, it may be naturally supposed that the indoor life of that time might have been nearer to that of the Chinese or the European than to that of the modern Japanese. Accordingly their outdoor life, too, must have been far different from that of the present day. For ex-

ample, modern Japanese are fond of trimming or arranging flowers, putting two or three twigs into a small vase or a short bamboo tube, by methods which, however dainty, are very conventional after all. What they rejoice in thus is to produce a distorted semblance in miniature as tiny as possible of a certain aspect of nature. In the age of the Nara emperors, on the contrary, large bunches of flowers must have been used profusely in decorating rooms and tables, and perhaps to strew on the ground. A great many flower baskets, which are kept in the said treasury, and are of a kind to the use of which the modern Japanese are not accustomed, prove the above assertion. Again, while modern Japanese ladies play exclusively on the *koto,* a stringed musical instrument laid flat on the *tatami* when played, Nara musicians seem to have played on harps, too, one of which also is extant in the treasury. Carpets seem to have been used not only in covering the floor, but were put down on the ground on occasions of some ceremonial processions. Hunting, rowing, and horsemanship were then the most favourite pastimes of the nobles. Unlike modern Japanese ladies, women of that time were not behind men in riding. This one fact will perhaps suffice to attest the jovial and sprightly character of the social life of the Nara age.

If we turn to the literature of the time, the progress was remarkable, more easily perceivable than in any other department. We had now not

only ballads as before, but short epics also. Such a change must of course be attributed to the influence of the Chinese literature assiduously cultivated. In the year 751 a collection of 120 select poems in Chinese, composed by the 64 Nara courtiers since the reign of the Emperor Tenchi, was compiled and named the *Kwai-fû-sô*. These poems are quite Chinese in their diction, rhetoric, and strain, resembling in every way those by first rate Chinese poets, and may fairly take rank among them without betraying any sign of imitation or pasticcio. If we consider that no kind of Japanese literature in its own mother tongue could be committed to writing, save only in Chinese ideographs, the influence of the Chinese literature, which flourished so rampantly at that time in Japan, cannot be estimated too highly. No wonder that, parallel to the compilation of the Chinese poems, a collection of Japanese poems, beginning with that of the Emperor Yûryaku in the latter half of the fifth century, was also undertaken. This collection is the celebrated *Man-yô-shû*. The long and short poems selected, however, were not restricted, as in the case of the *Kwai-fû-sô*, to those by courtiers only. On the contrary, it contained many poems sung by the common people, into which no whit of Chinese civilisation could have peneterated. The *Man-yô-shû*, therefore, is held by Japanese historians to be a very useful source-book as regards the social history of the time.

It is hardly to be denied that some of the Japanese poems of that age were evidently composed and committed to writing with the object of being read and not sung, as almost all modern Japanese poems are accustomed to be. There were still many others at the same time which must have been composed from the first in order only to be sung. Men of the age, of high as well as of low rank, were singularly fond of singing, generally accompanied by dancing. Many pathetic love stories are told about those gatherings of singers and dancers, the *utagaki,* which literally means the singing hedge or ring. This kind of gleeful gathering used to take place on a street, in an open field, or on a hill-top. In one of the *utagaki* held in the city of Nara, it is said that members of the imperial family took part too, shoulder to shoulder with citizens and denizens of very modest standing. As to dances of the time there might have been some styles original to the Japanese themselves. At the same time there were to be found many dances of foreign origin, imported, together with their musical accompaniments, from China and the peninsular states. These dances have long ago been entirely lost in their original homes, so that they can be witnessed only in our country now. A strange survival of ancient culture indeed! Of course even in our country those exotic and antiquated dances do not conform to the modern taste, and on that account are not frequently performed. They

have been handed down through many generations, however, by the band of court musicians, and at present these dances, dating back to the T'ang dynasty, are performed only at certain archaic court ceremonies.

From what has been stated above, one can well imagine that, in certain respects, Japan of the Nara age had much in common with Greece just about the time of the Persian invasion. In both it was an age in which a vigorous race reached the first flourishing stage of civilisation, when the national energy began to be devoted to æsthetic pursuits, but was nevertheless not yet enervated by over-enlightenment. Whatever those Japanese set their minds on doing, they set about it very briskly and cheerfully, nor was their enthusiasm dampened by any fear of probable mishap. Being naïve, and therefore ignorant of obstacles inevitable to the progress of a nation, they always soared higher and higher, full of resplendent hope. How eager they were to essay at great things may be conjectured from the size of the Daibutsu, the colossal statue of Buddha, in the temple of the Tôdaiji at Nara. The statue, more than fifty-three feet in height, was finished in 749 A.D. after several successive failures encountered and overcome during four years, and is the largest that was ever made in Japan. That such a great statue was not only designed, but was executed by Japanese sculptors, whether their origin be of immigrant stock or not, should be considered a

great credit to the enterprising spirit and the artistic acquirements of the Japanese of that epoch.

Such a stride in the national progress, however, was only attained at the expense of other quarters not at all insignificant. On the one hand, it is true that Japan benefited immensely by having had as her neighbor such a highly civilised country as China of the T'ang. On the other hand, it should not be overlooked that it was a great misfortune to us that we had such an over-shadowingly influential neighbour. China of that time was a nation too far in advance of us to encourage us to venture to compete with her. She left us no choice but to imitate her. Who can blame the Japanese of the Nara age if they thought it the most urgent business to run after China, and try to overtake her in the same track down which they knew the Chinese had progressed a long way already? The glory and splendour of the Chinese civilisation of the T'ang was too enticing for them to turn their eyes aside and seek a yet untrodden route. That they strove simply to imitate and rejoiced in behaving as though they were real Chinese should not be a matter for astonishment in the least. Perhaps it may be said to their credit that the imitation was exquisite and the resemblance accurate. One of the brilliant students then sent abroad remained there for eighteen years, and after his return to this country he eventually became a prominent minister of the Japanese government, notwithstanding his humble origin, a

promotion very rare in those days. Certain branches of Chinese literature, many refined ceremonies, various kinds of Chinese pastimes, many things Chinese, useful and beneficial to our people, to be found in Japan even to this day have been attributed to his importation. Another scholar who was obliged to stay in China for more than fifty years, distinguished himself in the literary circles of the Chinese metropolis, was taken into the service of a T'ang emperor as a very high official under a Chinese name, and at last died there with a life-long yearning for his native country.

Such an imitation, however useful it might have proved in behalf of our country at large, could not fail to exact from the nation still young, as Japan was at that time, a tremendous overexertion of their mental faculties. Having been strained to the last extremity of tension, the Japanese became naturally exceedingly nervous. From a lack of patience to observe quietly the maturing of the effect of a stack of laws and regulations already enacted, they hastily repudiated some of them as if they were of no use, and replaced them by new laws quite as confounding as the previous ones, and thus legislations contradictory in principle rapidly succeeded one another, none of them having had time enough to be experimented with exhaustively. Although along with this rage for imitation there was a strong countercurrent, very conservative, which struggled incessantly to pre-

serve what was original and at the same time precious, yet to determine which was worthy of preservation was a matter of bewilderment to the contemporaries, for they were averse from coming into any collision with things Chinese to which they were not at all loth. Excitement and irritation, the natural result of this topsyturvy state of things, can best be estimated by the belief in ridiculous auspices. The discovery of a certain plant or animal, of rare colour or of unusual shape, generally caused by deformities, was enthusiastically welcomed as an augury of a long and peaceful reign, and was wont to call forth some lengthy imperial proclamation in praise of the government. Bounties were munificently distributed to commemorate the happy occasion, discoverers of these rarities were amply rewarded, criminals were released or had the hardships of their servitude ameliorated. Naturally, many of these auguries proved vain, and only served as a prop to sustain the self-conceit of responsible ministers, or as a means of soothing general discontent, if such discontent could ever be manifested in those "good old times." The greatest evil of this fatuous hankering for sources of selfsatisfaction was the throng of rogues and sycophants thereby produced who vied with one another in contriving false or specious rarities and begging imperial favour for them. Superstitions of this kind would have suited well enough a people quite uncivilised, or too civilised to care for rational things. As

for the Japanese, a people already on the way of youthful progress, radiant with hope, belief in auspices was but an intolerable fetter. If viewed from this single point, therefore, the régime ought to have been reformed by any means.

Another and still greater evil of the age was the clashing of interests between the different classes of people. Chinese civilisation could permeate only the powerful, the higher classes. Though the chieftains and lords, who had been mighty in the former régime, were bereft of their power by the appropriation of their lands and people, a new class of nobles soon arose in place of them, and among the latter the descendants of Nakatomi-no-Kamatari were the most prominent. This sagacious minister, of whom I have already spoken in the foregoing chapters, was rewarded, in consideration of his meritorious services in the destruction of the Soga, as well as in the execution of the most radical reform Japan has ever known, with the office of the most intimate advisory minister of the Emperor, and was granted the honourable family appellation of Fujiwara. His descendants, who have ramified into innumerable branches and include more than half of the court-nobles of the present day, enjoyed ever-increasing imperial favour generation after generation. What marked especially the sudden growth of the family position was the elevation of one of the grand-daughters of the minister to be the imperial consort of the Emperor Shômu. For

several centuries prior to this, it had been the custom to choose the empress from the daughters of the families of the blood imperial. An offspring of a subject, however high her father's rank might be, was not recognised as qualified to that distinction. The privilege, which the Fujiwara family was now exceptionally honoured with, meant that only this family should have hereafter its place next to the imperial, so that none other would be allowed to vie with it any more. The Fujiwara became thus associated with the imperial family more and more closely, and affairs of state gradually came to be transacted as if they were the family business of the Fujiwara. The worst evil of this aggrandisement was only prevented by the incessant and inveterate internecine feuds within the clan itself, which eventually served to put a bridle on the audacity and ambition of any one of the members.

This influential family of the Fujiwara, together with a few other nobles of different lineage, including scions of the imperial family, monopolised almost all the wealth and power in the country. They kept a great number of slaves in their households, and held vast tracts of private estates, too. As to the land, they developed and cultivated the fields by the hands of their slaves or leased them for rent. Besides, they turned into private properties those lands of which they were legally allowed only the usufruct. By the reform legislation, the usufruct of a public land was

granted to one who did much service to the state, but the duration of the right was limited to his life or at most to that of his grand-children. None was permitted to hold the public land as a hereditary possession without time limit. It was by the infringement of these regulations that arbitrary occupation was realised.

Another means of the aggrandisement of the estates of the nobles was a fraudulent practice on the part of the common people. Those who were independent landowners or legal leaseholders of public lands were liable to taxation, as may be supposed, and as the taxes and imposts of that time were pretty heavy, those landholders thought it wiser to alienate the land formally by presenting it to some influential nobles or some Buddhist temples, which came to be privileged, or asserted the right to be exempted from the burden of taxation. In reality, of course, those people continued to hold the land as before, and were very glad to see their burden much alleviated, for the tribute which they were obliged to pay to the nominal landlord by the transaction must have been less than the regular taxes which they owed to the government. Moreover, by this presentation they could enter under the protection of those nobles or temples, which was useful for them in defying the law, should need arise. The number of independent landholders thus gradually diminished by the renunciation of the legal right and duty on the part of the holders, and consequently

the amount of the levied tax grew less and less. The state, however, could not curtail the necessary amount of the expenditure on that account. The dignity of the court had to be upheld higher and higher, state ceremonies performed regularly, and the national defence was not to be neglected for a moment. All these were causes which necessitated a continual increase of revenue. In order to fill up the deficit, the burden was transferred, doubled or trebled, to those who remained longer honest, so that it soon became quite unbearable for them also. The hardships borne by the law-abiding people of that time could be compared to those of the Huguenots who, faithful to their confession, were impoverished by the dragonnade. In this way, more and more people were induced to give up their independent stand and take shelter under the shield of mighty protectors. Military service, too, was another grievance for the common people. They had to serve in the western islands against continental invaders, or on the northern frontier against the Ainu. Not only did they thereby risk their lives, but sometimes they were obliged to procure their provisions at their own cost, for the government could not afford it. If those people would once renounce their right of independence and turn voluntary vagabonds, then they could at once elude the military duty and the tax. No wonder this was possible since it was an age in which the national consciousness was not yet developed enough to teach them implicitly

that it was their duty to be ready to expose themselves to any peril for the sake of the state. This underhand transaction is one exceedingly analogous to the process in which Frankish allod-holders gradually turned their lands into fiefs, in order to escape taxation and at the same time obtain protection from influential persons. If one should think that the census, which was ordained in the reform law to take place periodically, would prove efficient to check the increase of these outcasts, it would be a great mistake in forming a just conception of these ages. Soon after the enactment of the census law, it ceased to be regularly executed, and even while the law was observed with punctuality, the extent to which it was applied must have been very limited. It was at such a time that the great statue of Buddha was completed in the city of Nara, and ten thousand priests were invited to take part in a grand ceremony of rejoicing.

The palaces and temples in Nara, as well as the imperial mansions and the abodes of nobles scattered about the country, seem in a great measure to have been solidly and magnificently built, with their roofs covered with tiles as beforementioned. The nobles who had no permanent residence in the city, had as their bounden duty to pay certain duty visits, as it were, to the imperial court, and learn there how to refine their country life by adopting the metropolitan ways of living. Some of the household furniture used by the nobles and

members of the imperial family was bought in China. The education of the higher classes enabled them not only to read and write the literary Chinese with ease and fluency, but to behave correctly according to Chinese etiquette, as if they were themselves genuine Chinese. These are the bright aspects of the history of the Nara age. Around the metropolitan city, however, and those aristocratic abodes in the country, swarmed the impoverished people, utterly uneducated, receiving no benefit whatever from the imported Chinese civilisation. Here one might perhaps ask, could not Buddhism give them any solace at all? Not in the least. The shrewd Buddhists, having seen that Shintoism had been strangely tenacious in resisting the propagation of their creed notwithstanding its lack of system and dogma, wisely invented a clever method to keep a firm hold even on the conservative mind by identifying the patron deities of Buddhism with the national gods of our country. It resembles in some ways the device of the early Christian missionaries in northern Europe, who tried to blend Teutonic mythology with Christian legend. The only difference between them is that those missionaries did not go so far as our Buddhist priests did. This device of the Buddhists was crowned with complete success. By this identification Buddhism became a religion which could be embraced without any palpable contradiction to Shintoism, in other words, with no risk of injuring the national traditions. Nay,

it came to be considered that Shintoism was not only compatible with Buddhism, but also subservient to its real interests. Thus we find almost everywhere a Shinto shrine standing within the same precincts as a Buddhist temple, the Shinto deity being regarded as the patron of the Buddhist creed and its place of worship. This strange combination continued to be looked upon as a matter of course until the Restoration of Meidji, when the revival of the imperial prerogative was accompanied by a reaction against Buddhism, and the purification of Shintoism from its Buddhistic admixture was enthusiastically undertaken. On account of the dubiosity of their religious character, many finely built temples and images of exquisite art were ruthlessly demolished, much to the regret of art connoisseurs.

In the year 794, the Emperor Kwammu transferred his capital to the province of Yamashiro, and gave it the felicitous appellation of Hei-an, which means peace and tranquility. The place, however, has been commonly designated by the name of Kyoto, which means literally the capital, and continued henceforth to be the centre of Japan for more than one thousand years. There might have been several motives which caused the capital to be removed from Nara. The valley, in which the old capital was situated, might have been too narrow to allow free expansion, or it might have been found inconveniently situated as regards communications. Party strife among the

nobles might have been another reason. At any rate the choice of the new site cannot be regarded as a mistake. Kyoto is better connected with Naniwa, Ôsaka of the present day, than Nara was at that time. From Kyoto one was able to reach the port within a few hours, by going down the river Yodo by boat. There is no natural hindrance on the way like the mountain chain which divides the two provinces of Yamato and Settsu. At the same time, Kyoto is quite near to Ohtsu, the gate toward the eastern provinces, and those selfsame provinces were the regions which had for long been engrossing the attention of far-sighted contemporary statesmen.

The energetic Emperor Kwammu undertook the conquest of the Ainu with a renewed vigour. That part of the Ainu country which faced the Sea of Japan was already made a province before the accession of that sovereign. In the Emperor's reign the success of the Japanese arms was carried far into the Ainu land by the victorious general Sakanouye-no-Tamuramaro. The boundary of the province of Mutsu, the region facing the Pacific, was pushed northward into the middle of the present province of Rikuchû. Enterprising Japanese settled in those lands or travelled to and fro in quest of trade. The Ainu, however, was not completely subjugated, nor was he easily driven away out of the main island. Beyond Shirakawa, the place which had for a long time been considered the northernmost limit of civilised

Japan, numerous hordes of half-domesticated Ainu continued to reside as before. As the result of the constant contact with the Japanese, they were slowly influenced by the civilisation which the latter had already acquired. They could consolidate their forces under the leadership of some valiant chiefs, and frequently dared to rise against oppressive governors sent from Kyoto. In short, they proved to be intractable as ever, so that more than three centuries were still necessary to put their land in the same status as the ordinary Japanese province. The interminable wars and skirmishes waged thenceforth between the two races were one of the principal causes of the financial embarrassment of the government at Kyoto, and finally undermined its power.

The imperial family and the nobles lived their lives at Kyoto, largely as they were wont to do at the old capital of Nara. The family of the Fujiwara was ever as ascendant as before. Abundant court intrigues were now not the outcome of the antagonism between the different great families, but of the internal quarrels within the single family of the Fujiwara, not infrequently intermingled with disputes concerning the imperial succession. All the high and lucrative offices were monopolised by the members of that able and ambitious family. Most of the empresses of the successive sovereigns were their daughters. The regency became the hereditary function of the family, and they filled the office one after another

without any regard to the age or health conditions of the reigning emperor. It was very rare indeed for members of families other than the Fujiwara to be promoted to one of the three great ministerships. Even scions of the imperial family had to yield to them in power and position.

Their literary attainments were generally high, being but little inferior to those of the professional literati, who formed a class of secondary courtiers, and proceeded generally from the families of the Sugawara, Kiyowara, and so forth. Ships with ambassadors, students, and priests were sent by them to China of the T'ang as before. For they still burned with an ardent desire to get more and more knowledge about things Chinese. Their Sinicomania was carried indeed to such an excess that the physiognomical type of the Chinese came to be regarded as the finest ideal of mankind, and any Japanese who was of that type was adored as having the ideal features.

The despatch of the official ships continued as in the days of Nara, not at regular intervals, but generally once during the reign of every Japanese emperor. The impetuous imitation of Chinese legislation slackened in fact, for in that respect we had already borrowed enough. The connection of our country with China began to take the form of ordinary international intercourse, with due reciprocation of courtesies. There remained, however, some need of keeping pace with the political changes in China, and we could not make

up our minds to refrain altogether from peeping into the land which we held to be far above our country in civilisation. The last of such an embassy was that sent in the year 843. Half a century afterwards another squadron was ordered to be despatched, and Sugawara-no-Michizane was appointed ambassador. But the squadron was never really sent. For at that time the long dynasty of the T'ang was just drawing near to its end, and the civil war of a century's duration was beginning. There was no more any stable government in China with which we could communicate. Moreover, there was danger to be feared that we might be somehow embroiled in the anarchical disturbances in the Middle Kingdom. The ambassador, Michizane himself, was also of the opinion that little was to be gained by the despatch of the intended squadron, and dissuaded the government from sending it.

Japan now entered into the stage of the assimilation of the alien culture already imported in full. Hitherto we had been too busy to make discrimination among those things Chinese which we had engulfed at random. Now we had to make clear which of them was suited, and how others were to be modified in order to make them useful to our country. In short, we had to digest; or to speak by the book, we had to ruminate on what we had already taken. After all it must have been a wise policy to put a stop to the state of national nervousness caused by the incessant

introduction of foreign laws, manners, customs, things. The infiltration, however superficial it might have been, left an ineradicable influence owing to the continual process of several centuries. The spirit of the culture of the dominant class became essentially Chinese. Though the saying, "Japanese spirit and Chinese erudition" was henceforth fondly spoken of, the Japanese spirit itself was not yet clearly defined, and did not enter into the full consciousness of the nation. What the ruling nobles, who had imbibed the Chinese spirit already too deeply, could do was only to discard things which became superannuated and untenable.

The characteristics of the age of rumination may be discerned in the history of our literature from the latter half of the ninth century to the beginning of the eleventh. At first, while literary works were still being written almost exclusively in Chinese, we begin to find in their style traces of Japanisation, becoming more and more marked as time goes on. Along with works in Chinese, those in our own language began to appear, though very sparsely at first. Then gradually these attempts in the vernacular increased, so that eventually the end of the tenth century became the culminating period of the classical Japanese literature. Religious and scholastic works were written in Chinese as before. August and ceremonial documents continued to be composed in the same language. Chinese poetry was as much

in vogue among the courtiers as ever. At the same time, however, numerous works in Japanese now appeared in the form of chronicles, diaries, short stories, novels, satirical sketches, and poems. What was most remarkable, however, is that the greater part of those works was written not by men, but by court ladies. Among the ladies, who by their wit and literary genius brightened the court of the Emperor Ichijô, stood at the forefront Murasaki-shikibu, the author of the *Genji-monogatari,* and Sei-Shônagon, the author of *Makura-no-sôshi.*

That these intelligent and talented court ladies were versed in Chinese literature can be perceived in what they wrote in Japanese. In other words, the culture, essentially Chinese, of the high circles of society was not monopolised by the men only, but shared by the women. And these court ladies were fairly emancipated, and far from being subject to the caprices of men. It is often argued that the progress of a country can be measured rightly by the social status of the women in it. If that be true, Japan at the beginning of the eleventh century must have been very highly civilised. And it was really so in a certain sense. This civilised Japan, however, was confined to the very narrow circle in Kyoto, and for that very circle the Chinese enlightenment penetrated too deep. The great nobles of the Fujiwara family were too refined, too effeminate for holders of the helm of

the state, the young state in which there was still much to be done vigorously.

The Ainu on the north were menacing as ever. For though they had lost in extent of territory, they had gained in civilisation. The demand of the state was for energetic ministers as well as for valiant warriors. The high-class nobles became unfitted for both, and especially for the rough life of the latter. As generals, therefore, not to speak of officers, were employed men of comparatively low rank among the courtiers. In this way military affairs became the hereditary profession of certain families which happened to be engaged in them most frequently, and were at last monopolised by them. As the government, however, could not and did not care to provide these generals with a sufficiency of soldiers, provisions, and armaments, they were obliged to help themselves to those necessaries, just like the leaders of the landsknechts in Europe. The intimate relation of vassalage, not legally recognised of course, thus arose between those generals and their private soldiers, and as this condition lasted for a considerable time, the relationship became hereditary. Needless to say that such a condition of affairs was naturally set up in the provinces, where the Ainu was still powerful enough to raise frequent disturbances. On account of the fact that these generals and their relatives were often appointed to the governorship of distant provinces, where the influence of the Kyoto govern-

ment was too weak to check their arbitrary conduct, the same connection of vassalage was formed there also between them and the provincials who were in need of their protection. Not only did they thus become masters of bands of strong and warlike people, but they also appropriated to themselves by sundry means vast tracts of land, and fattened their purses thereby. That they did not venture at once to overthrow the political régime upheld by the nobles of the Fujiwara family may be accounted for by the time-honoured prestige of the latter. For a long while those warriors went even so far as to do homage to this or that noble of the Fujiwara as his vassals, and served as tools to this or that party in court intrigues. The courtiers, who employed them as their instruments, had no apprehension that those military men, subservient for the moment to their needs, would one day turn into rivals, powerful enough in the long run to overturn them, and flattered themselves that they would remain as their cat's-paws forever. An exact analogy of this in the history of Rome may be found in the shortsightedness of the senate, which complacently believed that the Scipios and the Caesars would for ever remain obedient to their order. It would be a fatal mistake to think that a cat's-paw would always remain docile and faithful to its employer. Especially when it is frequently used and abused it becomes conscious of its own usefulness and real strength; and self-

assertion is born. The next step for it must be the sounding of the strength of its master, then the desire awakens to take the place of the master, when it is found that he is not so strong as he looks to be.

Moreover in any country, in whatever condition, war cannot be carried on without a great number of participants, while it must be directed by a single head. War, therefore, tends on the one hand to create a dictator, and on the other hand to precipitate the democratisation of a country. None would be so ignorant for long as to discharge gladly an imposed duty without enjoying their right to compensation for service rendered. The time must come when these military leaders should supersede the ultracivilised Kyoto nobles, and hold the reins of government themselves. The transference of political power from the higher to the lower stratum was unavoidable. These generals, howsoever inferior they might be in rank compared with the court nobles of the Fujiwara, were still to be classed among the nobles, and it was yet a very far cry to the time when the common people could have some share in the politics of their own country.

CHAPTER VII

THE MILITARY RÉGIME; THE TAIRA AND THE MINAMOTO; THE SHOGUNATE OF KAMAKURA

For some time the military class had been rocking the prestige of the court nobles, and at last superseded them by overturning their rotten edifice. It was first by the wars of the so-called "Nine Years" and "Three Years," both waged in northern Japan in the latter half of the eleventh century by Yoriyoshi and Yoshiiye, the famous generals of the Minamoto family, that the military class began to grow markedly powerful and independent. Nearly a century passed, and then Yoritomo, one of the great-great-grandsons of Yoshiiye, was able to set up his military government, the Shogunate, at Kamakura in the province of Sagami. Previous to the Kamakura Shogunate, there was an interim between it and the old régime, the semi-military government of the Taira family. The family of the Taira sprang, like that of the Minamoto, from a scion of the imperial family, and, like the latter, had been engaged from the first in the craft of war. Of the two, the Taira first succeeded in courting the favour of the Fujiwara nobles, and the members of

the former family were appointed to less dangerous and more lucrative posts than the Minamoto. As Japan at that time kept on gravitating toward the west of Kyoto, it was natural that the influence of the Taira should have been extended in the western provinces. Some of the noted warriors belonging to this clan were now and then charged with the governorship of the eastern provinces, and therefore their descendants were widely scattered in those quarters also. In the east, however, the influence of the Minamoto family was paramount, for noted warriors of this family were more frequently employed than the Taira in the region against the Ainu. In both of these families, the moral link between several branches within the family was very loose, perhaps much weaker than in the Highland clans in Scotland. Such dissension should be attributed to the fact that those who passed under the same family name of the Minamoto or the Taira became soon too numerous to present a united front always, whenever a conflict with the rival family arose. At any rate the feud between the respective main branches of the two families was very bitter and inveterate, covering many generations. Of the two, the Minamoto, hardened by constant warfare with the still savage tribes in the north, and trained by the privations unavoidable in wars, surpassed the Taira in robustness and bravery. The Taira became, on the contrary, as the result of close contact with the courtiers at Kyoto, more refined than

the Minamoto. Though alternately employed as generals in war as well as instruments in intrigues, the Taira were thought by the Fujiwara to be more docile, and therefore were more trusted than the Minamoto. This is why the former were able to seize possession of the government earlier than the latter. Kiyomori, the first and the last of the Taira, who was made the highest minister of the crown, as if he were himself one of the Fujiwara nobles, was able to reach that goal of the ambition of courtiers, by intruding himself among them, intermingling his sons and grandsons with the flower of the Fujiwara, and at last he made one of his daughters the consort of the Emperor Takakura. His only distinction as compared with the old nobles was that his personal character was too rough and soldier-like, and the means he resorted to were too drastic and forcible, for the over-refined members of the Fujiwara. Kiyomori had in his quality too much of the real statesman to be an idle player in the pageants and ceremonies of the court, and it is said that he often committed blunders through his unseemly deportment as courtier, and became, on that account, the laughing-stock of the Fujiwara. Nevertheless he, like the most of the Fujiwara, could not rid himself of the mistaken idea, that the statesman and the courtier were the same thing, so that none could be the one without being the other. The younger members of the family were reared up rather as courtiers than as sol-

diers, trained more in playing on musical instruments, in dancing, and in witty verisification of short poems than in the use of weapons.

The most memorable deed achieved by Kiyomori was the change of the capital from Kyoto to Fukuwara, a part of the present city of Kobe. Till then Kyoto had been continuously the capital of the empire for three and a half centuries. To remove the centre of the government from that sarcosanctity must have been a great surprise to the metropolitans. As to the interpretation of the motives for this change, historians differ. It is ascribed by some to Kiyomori's abhorrence of the conventionalism which obtained in the old capital, and which was so deeply rooted as not to be eradicated very easily so long as he stayed there, or else to his anxious desire to get rid of the pernicious meddling of the audacious priests of the temple Yenryakuji, on mount Hiyei, the source of great annoyance to the government of Kyoto. By other historians the change is said to have originated in Kiyomori's farsightedness in having set his mind on the profit of the trade with China, the trade from which his family had already reaped a huge profit, and which could be carried on more actively by shifting the capital from Kyoto to the important port of the Inland Sea. That he earnestly desired the facilitation of navigation in the Inland Sea need not be doubted, for the cutting of the strait of Ondo, the improvement of the harbour of Hyogo, as the

port of Kobe was called at that time, and many other works pertaining to the navigation of the sea were undertaken at his orders. It is not certain, however, whether any of the above mentioned motives sufficed alone to induce him to forsake the historical metropolis. Whatever the reason the change was a failure. It was very unpopular in the circle of the Fujiwara nobles, who longed ardently to return to their old nests, and baffled by the passive resistance of these nobles in whatever he tried to do, Kiyomori could not achieve anything worthy of mention during the remainder of his life.

The brief period of the Taira ascendancy thus passed away very swiftly. It was since 1156 A. D., the year in which the war of the Hogen took place, that the military-men had begun to discern that they they were strong enough to displace the Fujiwara nobles. Only three years after that, the destiny of the two rival families was for a time decided. The Taira remained on the field, and the vanquished, that is to say, the members of the chief branch of the Minamoto, were either killed or deported, the rest having been scattered and rendered powerless to resist. Yoritomo, one of these exiles, was taken into the custody of an overseer of the province of Idzu, in the vicinity of which were settled the descendants of the faithful followers of his forefathers. When an opportunity came, therefore, he was able to muster without difficulty those hereditary

vassals, and overran, first the eastern provinces, and then, with the assistance of one of his younger brothers, Yoshitsune, who had taken refuge with Hidehira, the hybrid generalissimo of the half independent province of Mutsu, he drove the Taira party out of Kyoto, whither the capital had been transferred again a short time before, soon after the death of Kiyomori. What remained to be done was consummated by the tact and bravery of Yoshitsune. The partisans of the Taira family fought very valiantly on the coast of the Inland Sea, but always succumbed in the end to adverse destiny. In the last battle which was fought on the sea near the strait of Shimonoseki, some of the Taira were taken prisoners, and then decapitated. Many, however, died in the battle, or drowned themselves, for to be killed in cold blood by an enemy has ever been thought the most ignominious fate for a warrior of Japan. In thus presenting a united front to the last in adversity, the kernel of the Taira family, though much enervated by their court life, proved themselves true sons of the chivalrous warriors of old Japan. This catastrophe took place in the year 1185.

The flourishing period of the Taira family was of the short duration of thirty years only. As the rise of the family was very sudden, its downfall was equally abrupt. It was like a meteor traversing a corner of the long history of Japan, leaving, however, an indelible memory to posterity. The

peculiar charm of the culture of the age represented by the elite of the family during its ascendency, and its chivalrous end, embellish the history of our country with a number of pathetic episodes which provided abundant themes for poems, tales, and dramas of the after-age. The most famous among this literature is a narration called the *Heike-monogatari,* Heike in Chinese characters meaning "the family of Taira." Whether the *monogatari* or tale was first composed for the purpose of being read or recited is a question. It is certain, however, that when the story became widely known, called by the more simplified name of "the *Heike,*" it was generally recited as a chant, resembling the melody of Buddhist hymns, accompanied by the playing the *biwa,* a stringed instrument the shape of which has given its name to the largest lake in Japan. This recitation is the precursor of the *utai,* which was a kind of recitation fashionable in the next age. The origin of the more modern *jôruri* recitation accompanied by the *shamisen* may be traced to the *Heike* also. What pleased the audiences most in the *Heike* were the sad vicissitudes of the family and the gallant chivalry manifested in its downfall. The former, preaching the uncertainty of human life, was sufficient to touch the courtiers with keen pathos, courtiers who had lived out their time, and having been taught by Buddhism to look on every thing pessimistically, were glad to sympathise with whatever was on the wane.

Differently from them, warriors were also fond of hearing the rehearsal of the *Heike* with thrills piercing the heart, by putting themselves in the place of some gallant Taira cavalier, who had fought to the last with undaunted courage and met his death with calmness more than mortal.

It is not only because the Taira family was in general more refined than the Minamoto, and gave an impulse to the literature of Japan by its enlightened chivalry, that the period forms an important turning-point in the history of the civilisation of our country. Almost all the essential traits of our civilisation during the whole military régime can be said to have been initiated in this brief Taira epoch. As an inheritor of the borrowed civilisation, the Taira warriors were not so much saturated with the alien refinement as the Fujiwara nobles were, and therefore, when they came nearer the throne, the aspect of the court was not a little vulgarised, but instead there was a freshness in those warriors which was found wanting among the Fujiwara, already overwrought and exhausted by too much Chinese civilisation. This freshness may be considered an index of the revival of the conservative spirit, which had been long lurking in the lower strata of the nation. Conservatism in such a phase of history is generally on the side of strength and energy. It is true that Kiyomori, his sons, and grandsons endeavoured rather to go up the ladder of the courtiers higher and higher, in order to

soar 'above the cloud.' In other words, it was not their first ambition to lead the people in the lower strata against the higher; they were not revolutionists at all. But whatever might have been their real intention, they could not ward off those followers who had a common interest with them. There was no doubt that the lower class of people sympathised with the military-men, whether they were of the Taira or of the Minamoto family, far more deeply than with the Fujiwara nobles. The ascendency, therefore, of the Taira stirred the long latent spirit of the majority of the nation, and this re-awakening of the Japanese, if we may call it so, gave life to every fibre of the social structure, urging the nation to energetic movement.

The most tangible evidence of this resuscitation of Japan can be obtained in the sculpture of the age. The first flourishing period of Japanese sculpture anterior to this is the era of the Tempyô, that is to say, during the reign of the Emperor Shômu. After that the art fell gradually into decadence, and no period could compete with the Tempyô era except the Taira age. The works of Unkei and Tankei, representative masters who made their names at this time, though lagging far behind those of Tempyô sculptors in exquisite softness and serenity, yet surpassed the latter in vigour and strength. What they liked to represent most were statues of deities rather than Buddha himself, and of the

deities they preferred those of martial character. Comparing them with the Tempyô sculptures, in which the subject is not so narrowly circumscribed, we can observe the change of the national spirit very clearly.

In painting also, the most important progress of the age is the change in subjects of this art, or rather the increase in varieties of subjects to be painted. Before this time what the artists generally liked to paint were the images of Buddha, Buddhist deities, scenes in Buddhist history, and portraits of celebrated priests. Landscapes were put on canvas, too, though not so frequently as those subjects pertaining to Buddhism. Since then portraits, not only of priests, but also of laymen, such as courtiers and generals, have been treated by our painters. Some masterpieces of the new portraiture, by the brush of Takanobu, are extant to this day. This development of portrait-painting may be interpreted as a symptom of the newly-budding individualism on the nation. As to scroll paintings, formerly we had pictures of consecutive scenes in Buddhist history painted in that manner, but scenes from secular history or genre pictures were rare. From this time onward we have scrolls of a character not purely religious, though Buddhist stories are still used as subjects for painting as before. Moreover, in earlier scrolls the best attention was paid to painting Buddha or deities, and not to delineating the auxiliaries, such as landscapes, buildings, worship-

ping multitudes of various professions, and so forth, while in the new kinds of scrolls more stress was laid on depicting those auxiliaries rather than the pious personages themselves. Battle scenes in the provinces of Mutsu and Dewa, or those between the Taira and the Minamoto in the streets of Kyoto, were also painted on scrolls. Another and quite novel kind extant of the scroll pictures of this age is the satirical delineation of the manners and customs of the time by the brush of the painter-priest Toba-sôjô. In the famous scroll certain animals familiar to the daily life, such as foxes, rabbits, frogs, and so forth are depicted allegorically, each suggesting certain notorious personages of various callings in the contemporary society.

As to literature, a difference similar in nature to those characteristics of the literature of the preceding age can be observed very distinctly. In the former period, though the essence of the literature in Japanese was profoundly influenced by the Chinese spirit, Chinese vocabularies and phrases rarely entered into sentences without being translated into Japanese. That is to say, the Japanese literature remained pure as to language, and went on side by side with the literature in Chinese. Now the combination of the two kinds began to take form. Chinese words, phrases, and several rhetorical figures began to be poured into the midst of sentences, the structure remaining Japanese as before, so that those sentences may

be considered as forming a kind of hybrid Chinese, with words juxtaposed in a Japanese style, and connected by Japanese participles. This change resulted in making a great many Japanese words obsolete, and it has since become necessary for the Japanese constantly to resort to the Chinese vocabulary in writing as well as in speaking. The growth of Japanese as an independent language was thus regrettably retarded. At the same time Japanese literature reaped an immense benefit from this adoption of the Chinese vocabulary, for by it we became enabled to express our thoughts concisely, forcibly, and when necessary in a very highflown style, things not utterly impossible but exceedingly difficult for Japanese pure in form. The use of Chinese ideographs thus increased from generation to generation, until now it has become too late to try to eradicate them. All that which the Japanese nation has achieved in the past, its history, nay, its whole civilisation, has been handed to us, recorded in the language, which is woven of Chinese vocabularies and Japanese syntax, and denoted by symbols which are nothing but Chinese ideographs and their abbreviations, the Kana. A movement to supersede the Chinese ideographs by the exclusive use of the *kana,* which are very simple abbreviations of those ideographs, was initiated at the beginning of the Meidji era, but was dropped soon afterwards. Another radical movement to substitute the Roman alphabet for the Chinese ideographs

and the *kana* in writing Japanese, was started nearly at the same time, and still continues to have a certain number of zealous advocates. The success of such a movement, however, depends on the value of the civilisation already acquired by the Japanese. If that amounts to nothing, and can be cast aside without any regret, in other words, if the history of Japan counts for nothing for the present and the future of the country, then the movement would have some chance of succees; otherwise the attainment of the object is a dream of the millenium.

The manifestation of the new spirit of the new age in the sphere of religion is not less remarkable than in that of art or of literature. Since its introduction into our country, Buddhism had been very singular in its position as regards the social life of the nation. Though the imperial family and the higher nobles earnestly embraced the new creed, and worshipped the "gods of the barbarians," this acceptance of Buddhism cannot be called a conversion, because their religious thoughts were never engrossed by it. They continued to pay a very sincere respect to the old deities of Japan as before, while they were adoring Buddha enthusiastically. Shintoism was, if not a religion, something very much like a religion, more than anything else. So long as Shintoism remained as influential as of yore, the Japanese could not be said to have been converted to Buddhism. The Buddhist priests, having per-

ceived this, tried not to supersede but to incorporate Shintoism into their own creed, as I have explained before, and succeeded in it, but could not erase the independence of Shintoism entirely out of the spiritual life of the Japanese. It cannot be doubted that Buddhism was made secure as regards its position in Japan by this incorporation, but in general it gained not much. Assimilation, generally speaking, has as its object, to destroy the independent existence of the things to be assimilated, and at the same time the assimilator must run the risk of causing a condition of heterogeneity on account of the addition of the new element. Buddhism could not destroy the independent existence of Shintoism, and the former became heterogeneous by the assimilation of the latter, so that the *raison d'être* of Buddhism in Japan was very much weakened by the assimilation. The lower strata of the nation were very slow in being penetrated by Buddhism, notwithstanding the munificent encouragement afforded to it by the government, for example, by appointing preachers not only in the neghbourhood of the capital, but in distant provinces also, or by ordering the erection of one temple in each province at the expense of the government. The common people were in need of salvation indeed, but from the Buddhism which was nationalised, they could not expect to obtain what they were unable to find in Shintoism.

In short, Buddhism, by its transformation and

nationalisation, lost universality, its strongest point, and was rendered quite powerless, that is to say, blunted in the edge. Buddhism as a religious philosophy remained of course intact, but the cunning device of priests to make it comformable to our country went too far, and resulted only in weakening its efficiency as a practical religion. There were still to be found some numbers of priests who pursued their study in the intricate philosophy of Buddhism, in cloisters, in the depths of some forest or mountain recesses, but they were almost powerless to act upon society in general. The mass of the people looked on Buddhism only as the worship of an aggregation of deities, not much different from common objects of superstition, or simply as a kind of show very pleasant to see and to enjoy. They were too busy to care for meditation, and too ignorant to venture on philosophising.

Religion as a show! Seemingly what an astounding blasphemy even to entertain such an idea! No foreign reader, however, would be shocked at it, who knows that religious plays made the beginning of the modern stage of Europe, and that in villages in the Alpine valleys there may be found some survivals of them even now. Not only that, the services of the Roman Catholic and of the Greek Orthodox Church contain even to this day not a few theatrical elements. An appeal of this nature to the audience has always the effect of making the religion poetical,

and therefore was the method chiefly resorted to by the Church in the Middle Ages throughout all Christendom. The method employed by the Buddhists in our country was just the same. They instituted various ceremonies and processions, each apportioned to a certain definite day of a certain season, and these religious shows served to captivate the minds of the spectators.

Here, however, the difference should be noticed between Christianity and Buddhism. The former as a rule is the religion which finds its foothold first among the lower classes of the people, while the latter, in Japan at least, began its propaganda with the upper circles of the nation, and then proceeded downwards. Though the courtiers could frequently enjoy the gorgeous spectacles carried out by priests clad in rich robes of variegated colours amid heavenly music, such scenes could be witnessed only in and about the metropolis, and were moreover too costly and aristocratic to be enjoyed by the common people. The masses were not only debarred from the salvation of their souls, but from the sight of the pageants, the best pastime which an age devoid of a theatre could afford. Yet those masses were a necessary ingredient of society in Japan, by no means to be neglected. Though very slowly, their eyes were opening, and they were beginning to claim their due. How could this demand, not sufficiently conscious to the claimants themselves, be provided for? Solely by Buddhism, which

should have been by whatever means reformed.

Shintoism, though it has had a very tenacious grip on the national spirit of the Japanese, is deficient in certain particulars, and cannot be called a religion in the strict sense, so that it was difficult for it to march with the ever-advancing civilisation of our country. If there was a need, therefore, for something which could not be obtained outside of religion, it was to be sought elsewhere than in Shintoism, that is to say, in Buddhism, which was then the only cult in Japan worthy to be called a religion. To seek from it anything new, which it could not give in the state it had been, means that it ought to have been reformed. It is true that there had been repeated attempts, since the beginning of the tenth century, to make Buddhism accessible and intelligible to all classes of the people, and this kind of movement had become especially active at the end of the eleventh century. What was common to all of these movements was the endeavor to teach the merit of the *nem-butsu,* that is to say, the belief that anybody who would invoke the help of Buddha by calling repeatedly the name of Amita, one of the manifestations of Buddha, would be assured of the blissful after-life, and that the oftener the invocation was made the surer was the response. Most elaborate among them was an organisation of a religious community resembling in its character a joint-stock company. A member of this community was required to con-

tribute to the accumulation of the blessing by repeating its invocation a certain number of times, like a shareholder of a company paying for his share. This community is in a great measure analogous to those societies of Europe in the later Middle Ages, which tried to accumulate the virtues of the Ave Maria sung by their members. The most striking characteristic of this community was that it extolled its own unique merit which lay in having as its members all the Buddhist deities, whose celestial *nem-butsu* would be sure to augment the dividends of the earthly shareholders!

To organise such a community was not to undermine the traditional edifice of Buddhism in Japan, but to support it, just as those mendicant orders, Benedictine, Augustine, Franciscan, Dominican, and so forth, were formed but in behalf of the Church of Rome. The intention of those who emphasised the *nem-butsu* was very far from that of becoming the harbingers of the reform movement of the following generations, though the latter aimed at nearly the same thing as the early promoters of the *nem-butsu* did. Yeshin, a priest in the temple of Yenryakuji, became the precursor of Hônen, who was born more than one hundred years after the death of his forerunner. The former would not and could not become a reformer, though he was highly adored by the latter for his saintliness, who styled himself the only expounder of the former. The latter, too, was very modest and never ventured to

proclaim himself a reformer. Hônen was one of the meekest Buddhists in Japan. Yet he was forced against his will to become the founder of the Jôdo sect, which has continued influential to this day. All the religious reformers of the Kamakura period ran in his wake.

Religion, art, and literature were all thus transforming themselves almost at the same time, and that very time coincided exactly with the moment in which the most important change in the political sphere was taking place. Such a coincidence in the development of the various factors of civilisation cannot be lightly overlooked as a mere chance happening. Surely it must have been actuated by a common impulse, which was nothing but the urgent demand of the *Zeitgeist*. The régime matured by the Fujiwara nobles at Kyoto had already come to a standstill. Japan had to be pushed on by any means whatever. It is this necessity which allowed the Taira to get the upper hand of the Fujiwara. The rise of this soldier-family cannot be attributed merely to the merit of its representative members. But its fall owed much to their incompetency in not having become conscious of their position in the history of Japan. No sooner had they grasped the reins of the government, than they began to tread the path which their predecessors had trod, the path leading only to the stumbling-block. Too quickly they were transforming themselves into pseudo-courtiers. "The mummy-seekers were about to

be turned into mummies," as a Japanese proverb has it. It was just at this juncture, the last phase of the transformation of the Taira warriors, that they were overturned by the Minamoto. In short, the course on which the Taira steered was against the current of the age. If the family had remained in power longer than it actually did, then the just budded spirit of the new age would have dwindled away, and to Japan might have fallen the same lot as befell to other oriental monarchies. For our country it was fortunate that the Taira were no longer able to stay at the helm of the state.

Minamoto-no-Yoritomo preferred, at the establishment of his Shogunate, a course quite different from that of the Taira. Having been brought up during his boyhood at Kyoto, and being therefore acquainted with the realities of the metropolitan modes of life, he might have been, perhaps, averse to the Sybaritism of the court. If, on the other hand, he had been inclined to follow in the footsteps of the Taira, he was not in a position to behave as he would have liked, for it was not by any exertion of his own that he was exalted to the virtual dictatorship of the military government. The Minamoto and the Taira who had settled in the eastern provinces, in spite of the difference of their families, had been accustomed to the same condition of living, and they fought often under the same banner against the Ainu. Though quarrels were not lacking among them,

they could not help feeling the warmth of the fraternity of arms toward one another. These "rough riders" had gradually become refined by the education imparted by country priests; *tera-koya,* the "hut in a temple," was the sole substitute for the elementary school at that time. They had, too, occasion to come into contact with the civilised life of the metropolis, for it was their duty to stay there by turns, sometimes for years, as guards of the capital and of the imperial residence. Intelligent warriors among them took to the city life and mastered some of the accomplishments highly prized by courtiers. Most of them, however, looked with scornful smile upon the degenerate courtiers, like the Germans in the Eternal City looking with disgust on the decadent state of Imperial Rome. When Yoritomo entered into their company as an exile from Kyoto, these warriors were very glad to receive him, for he was descended from the family of the generals whom their forefathers had served hereditarily, and whose names they still revered. With this exile as their leader, they rose united against the Taira, the traditional enemy of the family to which he belonged. After the success of their arms they had no desire to have their chief turned into a pseudo-courtier after the example of the Taira soldiers. Kamakura was therefore chosen as the seat of the military government. This was in the year 1183.

In truth, Kamakura cannot be said to be a place

strategically impregnable even in those early times. It is too narrow to become the capital of Japan, being closely hemmed in by a chain of hills. Though situated on the sea, its bay is too shallow, not fit for mooring even a small wooden bark. The reason why the place happened to be chosen must be sought, therefore, not in its geographical position, but in that the town was planted nearly in the centre of the region inhabited by the supporters of Yoritomo. That it was also the location of the Shinto shrine, Hachiman of Tsurugaoka, might have had not a little weight in influencing the choice, because it was in this shrine that Yoshiiye, the forefather of Yoritomo and the adored demigod of the warriors of Japan, performed the ceremony of the attainment of his full manhood.

The military government, the Shogunate, set up at Kamakura, was in its nature of quite a different type from that of the Taira at Kyoto. Before entering into details, it is necessary, however, to say something about the change in the signification of government. When the Fujiwara became the real masters of Japan, they tried at first to govern wisely and sincerely. But as time passed their energy and determination gradually relaxed. Their growing wealth obtained by encroachment on public lands tended to mould them as a profligate and indolent folk, so that they became at last wholly unfitted for any serious state affairs. Moreover, from the lack of any event

which would have necessitated united action of all the family, a condition which might have been exceedingly difficult to attain even if they had wished it, on account of the multiplication of branches, never-ceasing internal feuds which helped only to weaken the prestige of the family as a whole were perpetually arising. It was at this juncture that the Emperor Go-Sanjô tried to recover the reins once lost to the hands of his ancestors. The task which he left unfinished was achieved by his son and successor, the Emperor Shirakawa. When the power was restored to the emperor, however, it was not in the same condition as when lost. The state business decreased in scope and significance, all that was left being merely the disposal of not very numerous manor lands, which had been left untouched by the greedy Fujiwara, and the policing of the capital. The Emperor Shirakawa did not deem it necessary as reigning Emperor to pay regular attention to them. He abdicated, therefore, in favour of his son, and from his retired position he managed the so-called state affairs. As the result of such an assumption of power, the position of the reigning emperor became very problematic, and irresponsibility prevailed everywhere. The imperial family thus regained some of its historical prestige, and succeeded in curbing the arrogance of the Fujiwara. The latter, however, continued very rich and powerful, though not so politically mighty as before. For a short while the Taira

achieved its object in partially supplanting the influence of the Fujiwara, but it could not perceptibly weaken the latter. The downfall of the Taira showed clearly that in such a state of the country mere names and titles meant practically nothing, and that the military power supported by material resources was the thing most worth coveting. The Taira started on this line, but soon collapsed by abandoning it. How could a shrewd politican like Yoritomo be expected to imitate the blunder of his opponent?

The Shogunate set up by Yoritomo at Kamakura was not of the sort which could appropriately be called a regularly organised government It was modelled after the organisation of a family-business office, which was common to all the noble families of high rank. There were several functionaries in the Shogunate, but they had the character rather of private servants than of state officials. The Shogun's secretaries, body-guards, butlers and so forth served under him not on account of any official regulation connecting them publicly with him, but only as his retainers, and were designated by the name of the *go-kenin,* which means "the men of the august household." To sum up, the Shogunate was established not for the state but for the family business. Yoritomo had never pretended to take possession of the government of Japan. The fact that at the beginning of the Shogunate its jurisdiction did not

extend over the whole of the empire testifies to the same.

In the foregoing chapters I have spoken about the encroachment on public lands by the Fujiwara nobles. The private farms which were called the *shô-yen* and resembled in their character the manors or great landed estates in England, increased year by year, so that they extended at last to all the distant provinces of the country. Some emperors were resolute enough to try to put a stop to the growth of this onerous infringement of the public property, but the orders issued by them had very little effect. As to the management of these farms, they were not administered directly by those nobles who owned them, and it was not uncommon for many manors lying far apart from one another to belong to the same owner. The proprietors, therefore, generally stationed some of their domestic servants in those manors to act as caretakers, or confided the management to men who were the original reclaimers of those manors or their descendants, from whom the nobles had received the lands as a donation. By this assumption of the duty of management, these servants of these nobles arrogated to themselves the right to govern and command the people living upon the estates, without any appointment from the government itself. It cannot be disputed that it was a kind of usurpation not allowable in the regular state of any organised country. The provincial governors of that time, however, were impotent

to put a bridle on those impudent managers, for most of the governors appointed stayed in Kyoto to enjoy the pleasure of city life, and left the business of the province to be administered by their lieutenants. Moreover, some of the manors were evidently exempted from the intervention of the provincial officials by a special order. In other words, most of the manors were communities which were to a great degree autonomous, each under the jurisdiction of a half independent manager, and that manager again standing in a subordinate position to his patron, who resided generally at Kyoto. So far I have spoken only of the manors belonging to the nobles of the higher class, including members of the imperial family. Other manors possessed by Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples were also under a régime not much different from those of the nobles. The Taira, too, at the zenith of their family power, had a great number of such estates and the sons of Kiyomori fought against the Minamoto with forces recruited from the tenants of those manors.

When Yoritomo overcame the Taira, he confiscated all the manors which had formerly been possessed by that family, and appointed one of his retainers to each of these appropriated manors as *djito,* which literally means a chief of the land. The duty of these *djito* was to collect for their lord Shogun a certain amount of rice, proportional to the area of the rice fields belonging to the estate. This reserved rice was destined to be used

as provision for soldiers, and was in reality the income of the *djito,* for he was himself the very soldier who would use that rice as provision. Besides the collection of rice, he had to keep in order the manor to which he had been appointed as chief, that is to say, the police of the maner was in his hands. Once appointed, a *djito* could make his office hereditary, though for this the sanction of the Shogunate was necessary. Yoritomo appointed also a military governor to each of the provinces. The authority of this governor, called the *shugo,* extended over all the retainers of the Shogun in that province, including the *djito.* It should be noticed, however, that the *shugo* was as a rule a warrior, who held the office of *djito* at the same time, in or out of that province.

As to the manors which were owned by Kyoto nobles, shrines, and temples, and therefore not at the disposal of the Shogun, no *djito* was appointed to them. Though the disputes about the boundaries, right of inheritance, and various other questions concerning the estates were decided by the legal councillors of the Shogunate, jurisdiction was restricted to those cases in which some retainer of the Shogun was a party. Otherwise, the right of decision was denied by the Shogun. The Shogun never claimed any right over the land which did not stand expressly under his jurisdiction. From this it can be inferred that he did not pretend to take over the civil government of

the whole of Japan. By the foundation of the Shogunate, however, Yoritomo became a very powerful military chief, sanctioned by the Emperor with the conferment of the title of "generalissimo to chastise the Ainu", and at need he was able to mobilise a large number of soldiers, by giving orders to *djito* through the *shugo* of the provinces. None was able to compete with him in military strength, and the business of the civil government had necessarily to fall into the hands of him who was the strongest in material force.

If such an anomalous state, as we see in the beginning of the Shogunate, had continued very long, the Shogunate would never have become the regular government of the country, and the dismemberment of Japan might have been the ultimate result. But fortunately for the future of our country, it did not remain as it was first established. Those managers of manors not belonging to the Shogun, seeing that they could be better protected from above by turning themselves into retainers of the Shogun, volunteered for his service. Nobles, shrines, and temples possessing these manors complained of course about the enlistment of the manor-managers into the Shogunate service. For by the transformation of the managers, those manors *ipso facto* came under the military jurisriction of Kamakura. As those owners, however, could not prevent the transformation, and as the income from those estates did not decrease in any great measure by the

extension of the jurisdiction of the Shogun over them, they had nothing to do, but tacitly to acquiesce in the new conditions. The number of retainers thus increased rapidly, and with it the Shogunate's sphere of jurisdiction grew wider and wider, till at last it covered the greater part of the Empire. The Shogunate was then no more a mere business office of a family, but the government *de facto* recognised by the whole nation. This process was consummated in the middle of the first half of the thirteenth century.

It would be a mistake to suppose that such a momentous change was effected without any disturbance. The Kyoto nobles, who were unable at first to see the political importance of the establishment of the Shogunate in an insignificant provincial village, were gradually awakened to the real loss which they would surely suffer by it, and longed to recover the reins, which they had once forgotten to keep and guard. Besides, there were many malcontent warriors both within and without the Shogunate. For after the death of Yoritomo, though the title of Shogun was inherited by his two sons, one after the other, the real power of the Shogunate fell into the hands of his wife's relations, the family of Hôjô. Warriors of other families were excluded from a share in the military government, and they, dissatisfied on that account, wished for some change in order to overthrow the Hôjô. Needless to say that outside of the Shogunate ambitious men were not

lacking, who desired to set up another Shogunate in place of that at Kamakura, if they could. All these discontented soldiery allied themselves with the Kyoto nobles, and caused the civil war of Jôkyu to ensue between them and the Shogunate represented by the Hôjô family. The war ended in the defeat of the former, and the Shogunate emerged out of the war far stronger than before.

Thirteen years after the war, the first compilation of laws of the Shogunate was undertaken by Yasutoki Hôjô. It is called "the compiled laws of the Jôyei," Jôyei being the name of the era in which the compilation was issued. This compilation was not so much a work of elaborate systematisation, nor an imitation of foreign laws, as was the reform legislation of the Taïhô. Rather it should be called a collection of abstracts of particular law cases decided by the judicial staff of the Shogunate. It is therefore an outcome of necessitated experiences like English "case-law", and had not the character of statute laws or provisions deduced from a certain fundamental legal principle in anticipation of all probable occurrences. The object of the compilation is clearly stated in the epilogue written by Yasutoki himself. According to this, it was far from the motive of the compilers to displace the old system of legislation by the promulgation of the new one. Old laws became a dead letter, without being formally abrogated, while the new code was is-

sued only for the practical benefit of the people in charge of various businesses.

Whatever might have been the real motive of Yasutoki and his legal councillors, the very act of the compilation cannot in itself fail to betray the consciousness on the part of the Shogunate that it had already a sufficiency of test cases decided to supply models for the decision of most of the disputes that might be brought before them in the future. Or we might say that the Hôjô became confirmed in their belief that the Shogunate was now so firmly established as not to be easily shaken at its foundation, and that they could henceforth command in the name of a regular government without any fear of serious disturbances. Certainly their victory in the civil war must have rid them of any apprehension of danger from the side of Kyoto.

This compilation was issued in the year 1232, that is to say, about fifty years after the founding of the Kamakura Shogunate. Thus we can see that this half-century had wrought an important change in the history of Japan. During this time the military régime was enabled to strike a firm root deep into the national life of the Japanese. The family of the Minamoto soon became extinct by the death of the second son of Yoritomo, and scions of a Fujiwara noble and then some of the imperial princes were brought from Kyoto one after another as the successors to the Shogunate. Yet they were all but tools in the capable hands of

the Hôjô family, which remained the real master of the military government of Kamakura. In course of time, the Hôjô also fell, but other military families successively arose to power, and the military régime was kept up by them in Japan until the middle of the nineteenth century. It is true that those changes in the headship and in the location of the Shogunate caused as a matter of fact corresponding changes in the nature of the respective military régime. The Shogunate of the Ashikaga family was of a different sort from that of Kamakura, while that of the Tokugawa at Yedo was again of another type than the Ashikaga's at Kyoto. Throughout all these different Shogunates, however, certain common characteristics prevailed, so that a wide gap may be discerned between them as a whole and the government of the Fujiwara courtiers. And those characters indeed have their origin all in this first half century of the Kamakura Shogunate.

What most distinguished the military régime from the preceding government was its being pragmatic and unconventional. It was not on account of noble lineage alone, that Yoritomo was able to establish his Shogunate. He owed a great deal to the willing assistance of the warriors scattered in the eastern provinces, who claimed descent from some illustrious personages in our history, but in fact had forefathers of modest living for many generations, and had maintained very intimate relations with the common people. The

Shogunate was bound by this reason not to neglect the interests of those who had thus contributed to its establishment. Moreover, in order to be able to raise a strong army at any time when necessary, the Shogunate was obliged to take minute care of the welfare of the retainers and of the people at large, for the faithfulness of the former and popularity among the latter counted more than other things as props of the régime. The contrast is remarkable when we compare it to the government by the Fujiwara nobles, who made an elaborate legislation, professing to govern uprightly and leniently, and to be beneficial even to the lowest stratum of the people, yet in reality caring very little for the felicity of the governed, looking on them always with contempt, though this lack of sympathy might be attributed more to some old racial relation than to the morality of those nobles. After all, the government of the Shogun, being regulated by a few decrees and guided by practical common sense, operated far better than the Fujiwara's. Where formalism had reigned, reality began now to prevail. The spirit of the age was about to be emancipated from convention. Japan was regenerated.

It was this regeneration of Japan, which kept up and nourished what was initiated in the Taira period. But for the Kamakura Shogunate, however, those germs of the new era might have been blasted forever. One thread of the continuous development from the Taira to the Minamoto

period may be clearly discerned in the sphere of religion. In 1212 died Hônen, the reformer of Buddhism, of whom I have already spoken in the preceding chapter, but before his death his teachings had gathered a great many adherents around him, and the sect of the Jôdo became independent of that of the Tendai. It was from this Jôdo sect that the Shinshû or the "orthodox" Jôdo, now one of the most influential Buddhist sects in Japan, sprang up, and became independent also. Shinran, the founder of the latter sect, is said to have been one of the disciples of Hônen, and the tenets of his sect, initiated by Shinran himself and supplemented by his successors, bear striking resemblance to the reform tenets of Luther in laying stress on faith and in denouncing reliance on the merit of good works in order to arrive at salvation. That the priests belonging to this sect have avowedly led a matrimonial life, a custom which was unique to this sect among Japanese Buddhists, is another point of resemblance to Lutheranism. In other respects, for example, in preaching the doctrine of predestination, it can be considered as analogous to Calvinism also.

Another important sect, which branched off from the Tendai, is that of the followers of Nichiren. His sect is called the Hokke, or Nichiren, after the name of the founder himself, and the sect still contains a vast number of devotees. It is the most militant sect of Buddhism in Japan, and that militancy might be traced to

the personality of Nichiren, the founder, who was the most energetic and aggressive priest Japanese Buddhism has ever produced. He, too, never claimed to have founded a new sect, and insisted that his doctrine was simply a resuscitated Tendai tenet. We can easily see, however, that in its pervading tendency it approached other reformed sects of the same age rather than the old or orthodox Tendai. Nichiren died in the year 1282, so that his most flourishing period falls in the middle of the thirteenth century.

One more sect I cannot pass without commenting on is the Zen sect. Its founder in Japan is Yôsai, whose time conincided with that of Hônen. Twice he went over to China, which had been for more than two hundred years under the sovereignty of the Sung dynasty, and studied there the doctrine of the Zen sect, which was then prevailing in that country. After his return from abroad, he began to preach first at Hakata, which had long continued the most thriving port for the trade with China. Afterwards he removed to Kyoto and thence to Kamakura, making enthusiasts everywhere, especially among the warriors. Like all other new sects, the teaching of Yôsai was not entirely a novelty, being a development of one of the many elements which constituted old Buddhism. The specialty of the sect was, instead of arriving at salvation by belief in some supernatural being outside and above one's self, to encourage meditation and introspec-

tion, and its general character tended to be mystic, intuitive, and individualistic. Strong self-reliance and resolute determination, qualities indispensable to warriors, were the natural and necessary outcome of this teaching. It was largely patronised by the Shogunate and the Hôjô on that account. Though Yôsai became the founder of the sect, neither he himself nor his teaching could hardly be called sectarian. To establish an hierarchical community or to organise a systematised doctrine was beyond his purpose, but the result of his preaching was precisely to bring both into being.

Not only the characteristics of these new sects, but the manner of their propagation deserves close attention. Some of them were started in the eastern provinces, and gradually extended their missionary activity toward the west, that is to say, in the direction which is contrary to that of the extension of civilisation in former times. Others, though started in the west or at Kyoto, concentrated their efforts in the eastern provinces with Kamakura as centre of propagation. In short, all the reformed sects turned their attention rather to the eastern than to the western provinces. This preference of the east to the west originated in the circumstance that the less civilised east gave to those missioners a greater prospect of enlisting new adherents, than western Japan, which would of a surety be slow to follow their new teachings, having been already won over by the older cults. It might, however, be added

that the preachers of the new doctrines saw, or rather overvalued, the importance of the new political centre as the nucleus of a fresh civilisation which might rapidly develop.

To say sooth, the field of activity of those untiring priests was not restricted to those eastern provinces, which are denoted by the general appellation of "Kwanto", but was extended into the far northern provinces of Mutsu and Dewa. This region at the extremity of Honto was long ago created as provinces, but had lagged far behind the rest of Japan in respect of civilisation. A considerable number of the Ainu were still lingering in the northern part of the two provinces. Fujiwara-no-Hidehira, the generalissimo of the region, who harboured Yoshitsune, the younger brother and victim of Yoritomo, is said to have been of Ainu blood. His sphere of influence reached Shirakawa on the south, which was considered at that time the boundary between civilised and barbarous Japan. The time had arrived, however, when this barrier was at last to be done away with. When a quarrel arose between the two brothers, Yoritomo and Yoshitsune, after the annihiliation of the Taira, and the latter sought refuge with Hidehira, Yoritomo thought of marching into Mutsu. This expedition was undertaken in the year 1189, after the death of Hidehira. His sons were easily defeated. The land taken from them was distributed by Yoritomo among his soldiers, who fol-

lowed him from the Kwanto and fought under his banner. The vast region, by coming thus under the military authority of the Kamakura Shogunate, was for the first time, taken into Japan proper. It was on account of this extension of political Japan over the whole of Honto, that the new sects had a chance to penetrate into those provinces.

We have seen that religion was the first and the most forcible exponent of the new age. If the Shogunate of Kamakura had remained in power longer than it did, other factors of the new civilisation might have developed quite afresh around the Shogunate. Art and literature of another type than that which flourished at Kyoto might have blossomed forth. The time was, however, not yet ripe for the total regeneration of Japan. The conventionalism of the Kyoto civilisation more and more influenced the Shogunate, which was still too young and had nothing solid of its own civilisation capable of resisting the infiltration of the old. Besides, several difficulties which lay in the way of the Shogunate coöperated in bringing about its fall in the year of 1332. Japan had to go on in a half regenerated state for some time.

CHAPTER VIII

THE WELDING OF THE NATION
THE POLITICAL DISINTEGRATION OF THE COUNTRY

A WAR with a foreign power or powers is generally a very efficient factor in history, conducing to the unification of a nation, especially when that nation is composed of more than one race. The German Empire, which was consolidated mainly by virtue of the war of 1864, 1866, and 1870-1871, is one of the most exemplary instances. Japan, being surrounded by sea on all sides, has had more advantages than any continental country in moulding into one all the racial elements which happened to find their way into the insular pale. These are the very same advantages which Great Britain has enjoyed in Europe. We should have been able, perhaps, without any coercion from without, to become a solid nation by the sole operation of geographical causes. If we had been left, however, to the mercy of influences of those kinds only, then we might have been obliged to wait for long years in order to see the nation welded, for in respect of the complexity of racial composition, Japan cannot be said to be inferior to any national state in either hemisphere. To fa-

cilitate the national consolidation, therefore, the force acting from without was most welcome for us.

Of wars serviceable to such an end, however, there had been very scanty chances offered to us. Though the wars against the Ainu had continued much longer than is apt to be imagined by modern Japanese, and had made their influence felt in bringing about the consolidation of the Japanese as a nation, the spasmodic insurrections of the aboriginies were but flickerings of cinders about to die out. For several centuries the Ainu had been a race destined only to wane irrevocably more and more, so that no serious danger was to be feared from that quarter. Outside of the Ainu, no other foreign people dared for a long time to invade us on so large a scale as to cause any serious damage.

As regards China, the dynasty of the Sung, which began to reign over the empire in the year 960, had been constantly harassed by the incursions of various northern tribes. After an existence of a century and a half, the greater portion of northern China was bereft of the dynasty by the Chin, a state founded by a Tartar tribe called the Churche. The Chin, however, was in turn overthrown in the year 1234 by the Mongols, another nomadic tribe, which rose in the rear of the latter state. Within a half century from that, the Chinese dynasty of the Sung, which had been long gasping in the south, drew its last breath under

pressure of the same Mongols that founded the Empire of the Yuan.

From China, therefore, in the state it had been, we had nothing to fear. As to the Korean peninsula, which had come under the influence of China at the time of the T'ang dynasty, the state founded there by the inhabitants was enabled now to breathe freely on account of the anarchical condition of the suzerain state. Though Kokuri and Kutara had, in spite of our assistance, been both destroyed by the army of the T'ang, Shiragi, which had been left unmolested by the T'ang as a half independent ally, conquered the greater part of the peninsula, and the people of that state frequently pillaged our western coasts. This Shiragi surrendered at the beginning of the tenth century to Korea, a new state which arose in the north of the peninsula. The relations of the new Korea with our country were on the whole very peaceful, except for some interruptions caused by the incursions of the pirates from that country on our coast at the end of the same century.

Besides the Koreans, there were many tribes inhabiting the north and the east of Korea and along the coast of the Sea of Japan, which made themselves independent of China one after the other, though all the states founded by them had but an ephemeral existence. Some of those minor states kept up a very cordial intercourse with our country, while others acted in a contrary way. Among the latter may be counted the pirates from

Toi, that is to say, from the region of a Churche tribe, though the real home of this throng of sea-thieves has not yet been identified with any exactness, pirates who devastated the island of Iki and the northern coast of Kyushu with a fleet consisting of more than fifty ships. This took place in the year 1019, and the repulse of this piratical attack was the last military exploit of the Fujiwara nobles.

After that complete tranquillity reigned in our western quarter for more than two centuries and a half until the first Mongolian invasion of 1274. Hitherto, to repel the inroads of priates, the forces which could be set in motion in the western provinces only, had proved to be more than sufficient for the purpose. Against the first Mongolian invasion also, the retainers of the Shogun in the western provinces only were mobilised as usual by command from Kamakura. The battle scenes of the war were described by one of the warriors who took part in it, and painted by a contemporary master on a scroll, which has come down in good preservation to our day, and now forms one of the imperial treasures to be handed on to prosperity. The expeditionary fleet of the Yuan consisted of more than nine hundred ships, with 15,000 Mongols and Chinese and 8,000 Koreans on board, besides 6,700 of the crews, so that it was too overwhelming in numbers even for our valiant soldiers to fight against with some hope of victory. It was not by the valour of our

soldiers alone, therefore, that the invasion was frustrated. The elements, the turbulent wind and wave, did virtually more than mere human efforts could have achieved in destroying the formidable enemy's ships.

Irritated at this failure of the first expedition, Khubilai, the Emperor of Yuan, immediately ordered the preparation of another expedition on a far larger scale. The second invasion of Japan was undertaken at last in the 1281, after an interval of seven years. This time the invading forces far outnumbered those of the first expedition, totalling more than one hundred thousand in all. On the other hand, the forces which the Shogunate could raise in the western provinces only proved this time plainly inadequate. Seeing this, Tokimune Hôjô, who was the virtual master of the Shogunate, mobilised the retainers in the eastern provinces too, and sent them to the battlefield in Kyushu. A fierce battle was fought on the shore near Hakata. Our soldiers made a desperate effort to prevent the landing of the enemy's troops, contending inch by inch against fearful odds, so that the Mongols could not complete their disembarkment, before a hurricane suddenly arose that swept away at least two-thirds of their men and ships. A lasting check was thus put upon the expansion of the triumphant Mongols on the east, just forty years after the battle of Liegnitz in Silesia had been fought successfully by the Teutonic nobles on the west against the same foe.

Though the frustration of the two Mongolian attempts upon our country should rather be attributed to the intervention of elemental forces which worked at very propitious opportunities, than to the bravery of our warriors, it cannot be disputed that they fought to their utmost, so that it would be derogatory to the military honour of our forefathers, if we supposed that nothing worth mentioning was achieved by them at all. In any case, the annihilation of the Mongolian fleet by us is an historical feat which might be considered together with the defeat of the Invincible Armada by the English three centuries later. In both countries the memorable victory was due to the dauntless courage of the warriors engaged in the battle, and the firm attitude of the person who stood then at the helm of the state. In Japan, Tokimune did not lend his ears to the milder counsels of the shrewder diplomatists at the court of Kyoto.

What is more noteworthy, however, than anything else in this war was not the bravery of our forefathers, but the fact that men recruited from the eastern as well as from the western provinces of the empire fought for the first time side by side against the foreign invaders. Such a coöperation of the people from all quarters of Japan in defence of the country was not a sight which could have been witnessed before the establishment of the military régime, for until that time the unification of the Empire had not extended to the north-

ern extremity of Honto, and for ninety years after the inauguration of the Shogunate at Kamakura, there had been no occasion for our warriors to try their fortune in arms against any foreign enemy. Now the Japanese were induced for the first time to feel the necessity for national solidarity, only because enterprising Khubilai dared to attack the island empire, which would have done no harm to him if he had left it unmolested, and would have added very little to his already overgrown empire, if he had succeeded in his adventurous expedition. It may be perhaps exaggerating a little to call this war a national undertaking on our part when we consider the small number of men engaged in it. The retainers of the Shogunate, however, who were the representatives of the Japanese of that time, all hurried to the northern coast of Kyushu, even from the remotest part of the empire, in order to defend their country against their common foe. The peculiar custom of intimidating children to stop their crying, by reminding them of the Mongolian invasion, an obsolescent custom which has existed even in the northernmost region of Honto, shows how thoroughly and deeply the Mongol scare shook the whole empire, and left its indelible impress on the nation as a whole. The first beat of the pulse of a national enthusiasm has thus become audible.

If this feeling of national solidarity had gone deep into the consciousness of the people, and had

continued steadily increasing without relaxation, then it might have done considerable good in facilitating the wholesome organisation of our national state. Viewed from this point, it must be considered rather a misfortune to our country that the terrible enemy was too easily put to rout. The pressure once removed, men no more troubled themselves about the need for solidarity. Nay, the war itself sowed the seeds of discontent among the warriors engaged, on account of the incapacity of the Shogunate to recompense them amply for their services. Already after the civil war of the Jôkyu era, the military government of Kamakura had been reduced to a straitened condition, for what it could get by the confiscation of the properties of the vanquished proved insufficient to provide the rewards for the faithful followers of the Shogunate. In the war with the Mongols, there was no enemy within the country from whom land could be confiscated. Nevertheless those warrors had to be rewarded with grants of land only, which the Shogunate could find nowhere. If the private moral bond, which had linked the retainers with the Shogun at the time of Yoritomo, could long continue in the state it had been, the Shogunate could have sometimes expected from them service without recompense. The military government, with the Hôjô family as its real master, however, could not likewise exact gratuitous service from them. The relation

between the Shogunate and its retainers became too public and formal for this.

Those who were appointed as *djito* by Yoritomo at the beginning of the Shogunate had all been retainers of the Minamoto family from the first. Though they discharged the duties of military police within their respective manors as if they were public officials, yet their private character far outweighed their public semblance. As the Shogunate gradually took the form of a regular government, this private and personal bond between the Shogun and his retainers grew weaker, and the public character of the *djito* began to predominate. This was especially the case after the virtual management of the Shogunate fell into the hands of the Hôjô family. It is true that those retainers still called themselves the *go-kenin,* or the domestics of the Shogun of Kamakura. The later Shogun, however, sprung from the Fujiwara family or of blood imperial, and could not demand the same obedience which Yoritomo had found easy to obtain from his hereditary vassals. In effect, the Shogunate reserved to the end the right of giving sanction as regards the inheritance of the office of *djito,* but the exercise of the reserved right was generally nominal. A *djito* could appoint as his successor either his wife or any of his children, or could divide his official tenure among many inheritors. No Salic law and no law of primogeniture yet existed in Japan of the Kamakura

period, so that, besides many *djito* who were incapable of discharging the military duties in person on account of sex or age, there were to be found eventually a great number of *djito,* whose official tenure covered a very small patch of rice-field, so small that it was too narrow to exercise any jurisdiction within it! Moreover, men of utterly unwarlike professions like priests, and corporations such as Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, were also entitled to succeed to the inheritance of the office of *djito,* if only it were bequeathed to them by a lawful will. In these cases, where the rightful *djito* could not officiate in person, a lieutenant, private in character, used to be appointed. Those lieutenants, however, not being publicly responsible to the Shogun, behaved very arbitrarily. That was a breach severely felt in the military system of the Shogunate.

The worst evil of all was that the Shogunate, which should have been an office for household affairs and the camp of the Shogun, was gradually turned into a princely court. Those warriors who did valiant service under Yoritomo in establishing the Shogunate had been in a great measure illiterate, so that only with great difficulty could the Shogun find a secretary among his retainers. As the organisation of the military government approached completion, the need of a literary education on the part of the warriors increased accordingly. Such an education, the source of which, however, was not to be sought

at that time out of Kyoto, could hardly be introduced into Kamakura without being accompanied by other elements of the metropolitan civilisation represented by the Fujiwara nobles. The installation of a scion of the Fujiwara and of princes of the blood imperial into the Shogunate facilitated the permeation of the Kyoto culture, which by its nature was too refined to suit congenially men of military profession. The bodyguard of the Shogun began to be chosen from warriors whose demeanor was the most courtier-like, and one of the accomplishments necessary was the ability to compose short poems. Such a condition of the Shogunate could not fail to estrange those retainers who did not live habitually in Kamakura, and were, therefore, not yet tainted with the effeminacy of a courtier's life. The main support, on whom the Shogun should have been able to depend in time of stress, became thus unreliable. At this juncture an Ainu insurrection, which was the last recorded in our history, broke out in the year 1322, and continued till the downfall of the Kamakura Shogunate. It was by this insurrection that the tottering edifice of the military government was finally shaken, instantly leading to its catastrophe.

The force which gave the finishing stroke to the Shogun's power and prestige came, as had long been expected, from Kyoto. Inversely as the warriors of Kamakura had been turned to pseudo-courtiers, the court-nobles of Kyoto had become

tainted by the militaristic temperament of the Kamakura warriors. The training in archery, the dog-shooting in an enclosure, which was considered a specially good training for a real battle, and many other martial pastimes became the fashion among the Kyoto nobles, as it had been among warriors. After their defeat in the civil war of the Jôkyu, they felt more keenly than before the magnitude of their power lost to Kamakura, and became the more discontented. Moreover, from the four corners of the empire the malcontents against the Hôjô family flocked to Kyoto, and persuaded the already disaffected courtiers, to attempt the restoration of the real command of the government to themselves. The Shogunate, having been apprised of the plot, tried to suppress it in time by force, but was unable to strike at the root of the evil, for the recalcitrants rose against the Hôjô one after another. On the other hand, those retainers who would have willingly died for a Shogun of the Minamoto family did not like to stake their lives on behalf of the Hôjô. Kamakura was at last taken by a handful of warriors from the neighbouring provinces led by a chieftain of one of the branch families of the Minamoto. The last of the Hôjô committed suicide, and with the downfall of the family, the Shogunate of Kamakura broke down. This happened in the year 1334. The real power of the state was restored to Kyoto in the name of the Emperor Go-Daigo.

The courtiers of Kyoto rejoiced in the thought that they could now conduct themselves as the true masters of Japan, but they were instantly disillusioned. Those warriors who had assisted them in the restoration of their former power, would not allow the courtiers to have the lion's share of the booty. Supported by a multitude of such dissatisfied soldiery, Takauji Ashikaga, another scion of the Minamoto, made himself the real master of the situation, and was appointed Shogun. Though once defeated by the army of his opponents at Kyoto, he was soon enabled to raise a large host in the western provinces, where, since the Mongolian invasion, the majority of the warriors thirsted for the change more than in other provinces, and he captured the metropolis. His opponents, however, continued their resistance in various parts of the empire. The courtiers, too, were divided into two parties, and the majority sided with the stronger, that is to say, with the Ashikaga family. At the same time the imperial family was divided into two. Thus the civil war, which strongly resembled the War of the Roses, ensued and raged all over the provinces for about fifty-six years, until the two parties were reconciled at last in the year 1392. In this way the whole of the empire came again under one military régime, and for about two centuries, the family of the Ashikaga continued at the head of the new Shogunate.

The new Shogunate was established at Kyoto,

instead of Kamakura, which became now the seat of a lieutenancy, administered by a branch of the Ashikaga, and therefore reduced in political importance. This change of the seat of the military government is a matter of great moment in the history of our country. One of the several reasons which may be assigned for the change, was that the supporters of the Ashikaga were not limited to the warriors of the eastern provinces, as they had been with the Kamakura Shogunate. Takauji owed his ultimate success rather to the soldiers from the western provinces, so that Kyoto suited far better as the centre of his new military régime than Kamakura.

Another reason which the Ashikaga Shogunate had in view in changing its seat, was that a great apprehension which had been entertained by the former Shogunate, would thereby cease. One of the anxieties which had harassed the government of Kamakura constantly had been the fear that it might one day be overthrown by attack from Kyoto. To provide against the danger a resident lieutenant,—afterwards increased to two,—a member of the family of Hôjô, was stationed at Kyoto. The function of these lieutenants was to look out for the interests of the Shogunate at Kyoto, and at the same time to superintend the retainers in the western provinces. Besides, being two in number, these lieutenants watched each other closely, so that it was impossible for either of them to try to make himself independent of

Kamakura. This system worked excellently for a time, but was ultimately unable to save the declining Shogunate. By shifting the seat of the military government to Kyoto itself, this anxiety might now be removed.

The greatest profit, however, which accrued to the Shogunate by the change of its government seat, was that one could facilitate the achievement of the political concentration of the empire, by making it coincide with the centre of civilisation. If the Shogunate of Kamakura could keep, with its political power, its original fresh spirit, which had remained latent during the long régime of the courtiers and begun suddenly to develop itself along with the establishment of the military government, the result would have been not only the prolonging of the duration of the Shogunate, but the full blossoming of a healthy and unenervated culture, and Kamakura might have become the political as well as the cultural centre of the empire. The history of our country, however, was not destined to run in that way. The time-honoured civilisation, which had been nurtured at Kyoto since many centuries, was, though of exotic origin, in itself a highly finished one. Notwithstanding its effeminacy, it had its own peculiar charm, which ranked in perfection far above the naïve culture of Kamakura, the latter being too rough and new, however refreshing. Those Buddhist priests who had once hoped to make Kamakura the centre of their new religious movement, found at last that

unless they secured a firm foothold in the old metropolis, nothing permanent could be attained. The missionary campaign of the various reformed sects had been undertaken with renewed vigour at Kyoto since the end of the thirteenth century. In other words, the enervation of the Kamakura Shogunate disappointed those torch-bearers of the new civilisation, who might perhaps have expected too much from the political power of the military government established there. Thus the Shogunate of Kamakura had lost its *raison d'être*, before other factors of civilisation, such as art and literature, had time to develop themselves there independent of those of Kyoto, so as to suit the new spirit of the new age, that is to say, before the Shogunate could accomplish its cultural mission in the history of Japan. The culture of Kyoto proved itself to be omnipotent as ever.

Regarded in this manner, the return of the governmental seat to Kyoto had a great advantage. The new Shogunate, having located its centre in the same historical place where the classical civilisation of Japan had had its cradle also, its military and political organisation could work hand in hand with the social and cultural movement. The prestige of the Shogun was bedecked with a brighter halo than when Kamakura had been the seat of his government. The change, however, was accompanied with invidious results, ruinous not only to the Shogunate, but to the political integrity of the country at large.

After having experienced the vicissitudes of a long civil war, the courtiers became convinced that they could not overthrow by any means the military régime, which had already taken deep root in the social structure of our country. So they began to think that it was wiser for them to make use of that military power than to try any abortive attempts against it. They heaped, therefore, on the successive Shoguns of the Ashikaga family titles of high-sounding honour, much higher than those with which the Shoguns of Kamakura had been invested. In the imperial palace, too, special deference was paid to the Shogun. Such a rise in the court-rank of the Shogun induced his retainers to vie with one another in obtaining some official rank of distinction in the courtiers' hierarchical scale. Those who belonged to the higher classes among them, though they were mostly the *shugo* or military governors of one or more provinces, used to spend a greater part of their time at Kyoto, on account of holding some civil office in the government of the Shogun, and lived in a very aristocratic way, which was easy and indolent, that is to say, not much different from that of the courtiers. There were many social meetings, in which both courtiers and warriors participated together, and the object of these meetings mostly consisted in enjoying various kinds of literary pastimes, among which the commonest was a trick in versification called *renga,* that is to say, the composing by turns of a line of an unfinished poem,

which should form a sequence to the preceding and at the same time become the prologue to the next. Through manifold channels of this and the like kinds of amusements, a very intimate relation between the two classes was cemented. The refinement of the courtiers' circle, though somewhat vulgarised compared with that of the previous period, freely penetrated into the families of the rough soldiery. Marriages between members of the two classes also took place frequently, by which the courtiers gained materially, while the soldiers could thereby assuage the uneasiness of their parvenu-consciousness. A new social life thus sprang up.

Among the two parties, which were reconciled in this way, that which profited the more by it, was of course the courtiers. Although the income from their manors, to which they were entitled as proprietors *de jure,* might have become less in comparison with that of the age anterior to the establishment of the Kamakura Shogunate, yet they were now relieved of all the troubles which might have beset them had they remained holding the real power of the state. Having relinquished their political ambitions and shifted all the cares of the state and military affairs upon the shoulders of the Shogunate, they became utterly irresponsible, could breathe freely and enjoy their idle hours not in the least disturbed. On the other hand, the militarists, having found that it was no longer necessary to circumscribe the privileges of

the courtiers still more narrowly than before, forgot that ultimately their interests must necessarily collide in principle with those of the latter. What were contradictory at bottom seemed to them practically reconcilable. The Shogunate thought that it was its duty to uphold the interests of the courtiers by its military power, a task which was soon found to be impossible. On account of the weakness of the central government, disorder ruled in Kyoto and in the provinces as well, and paved the way for the political disintegration of the whole empire. To explain the political phenomena I must turn for a while to the relations between the *shugo,* the military governors of provinces, and the *djito* under their protection.

In the time of the Kamakura Shogunate, as aforesaid, each province had a military governor, called the *shugo,* appointed by the Shogun. The *shugo,* himself a *djito,* and a very influential one of that class, served as an intermediate commander in transmitting to the *djito* under him the military instructions which he had received from Kamakura. He was, therefore, nothing else but a marshal of all the *djito* within that province. There existed no relation of vassalage between him and the *djito* under his military jurisdiction. The latter remained to the end the direct vassals of the Shogunate at Kamakura, and only as regards the military organisation were subordinated to the *shugo.* The office of the *shugo* was not the hereditary possession of any family, so that the

Shogun could nominate any *djito* to be *shugo* of any province at his pleasure, without fear of disturbing thereby the personal relation between him and his retainers in that province. In some respects this relation resembled that of the English king and the barons, who swore, besides their oath of fealty to a higher noble as their liege lord, direct allegiance to their king. As long as the line of Yoritomo, therefore, continued as hereditary Shogun, the Shogunate could depend on the fidelity of those *djito,* who were but the household vassals of the Minamoto family, and by this personal tie keep the political unity of the country infrangible.

After the extinction of the Minamoto family, the Shogun who succeeded one after another had no hereditary nor personal relations with those *djito,* and could claim no more than the official prestige of the Shogun allowed them to do. As to the Hôjô family, though the real power of the Shogunate was in its hands, originally it was no higher in rank than the *djito,* and could not, in its own name, command obedience from any of the Shogun's retainers. There is some similarity between the organisation of the time of the Kamakura Shogunate in this second phase and the "Kreis" institution of the German empire in the fifteenth century, which was initiated with the object of political concentration by Maximilian I., whose real power lay in his being a duke of Austria, and not Emperor of Germany. However

admirable as an organisation, such a political status was undoubtedly untenable. No wonder that the military régime of Kamakura gradually collapsed.

The relation of *shugo* and *djito* in the time of the Ashikaga was quite of a different sort from that in the former Shogunate. The office of *shugo* became now the hereditary possession of certain privileged families, which constituted a body of higher warriors, towering above the common *djito*. The *shugo* stood in the position of protector to all the *djito* of the province he governed, and those *djito* who stood under a *shugo* were designated his "hikwan" or protégés. The relation of vassalage arose thus between the *shugo* and the *djito* in the same province, a legal status which had not existed in the Kamakura period. The direct relation between the common *djito* and the Shogun, which was the main spring of the political régime of the Kamakura era, was now cut off. No doubt the *shugo* in the Ashikaga period had in their provinces, besides their suzerainty over the *djito*, the tenure of certain tracts of land, as in the days of Kamakura. The great difference between them, however, was that in the Kamakura era a retainer of the Shogun was first installed as a *djito* of a manor, and then appointed *shugo*, while in the Ashikaga age the land which the *shugo* held directly was his demesne as *shugo* and not the land held as a retainer of the Shogun at Kyoto, independent of his office of *shugo*. To sum up, the

shugo of the Ashikaga period was not a mere office, as in the days of Kamakura, but a legal status of the warriors ranking next to the Shogun. As the result of such an organisation each province or group of provinces under a *shugo* became a political entity, while it had been but a military entity in the Kamakura era. If the Shogun at Kyoto, therefore, had been strong enough to enforce his will over all the *shugo* of the provinces, then the political unity of the country at large could safely continue in the hands of the Ashikaga.

The Shogunate of the Ashikaga, however, had not been originally so formulated as to enable it to impose implicit obedience on all the higher military officials of the *shugo* class. For this family, though a branch of the Minamoto, had nothing in its history that could attract, as Yoritomo did, a vast number of willing warriors to serve under its banner. That Takauji was promoted to the headship of the second military government was largely due to the assistance of the warriors from various parts of the empire who were not personally related to his family, but were disaffected at seeing the power of the courtiers restored, neither was it by any means to be attributed to his personal capacity, which was rather mediocre both as general and as statesman. This origin of the Ashikaga family, therefore, made it difficult from the first for the Shogun of the line to curb the arrogance of his influential generals.

Insurrection against the Shogunate followed one after another, so that no year passed without some small disturbance somewhere.

This state culminated in the civil war begun in the Ohnin era, that is to say, in 1467. The war had its origin in the quarrel about the succession to the Shogunate between the son and the adopted son, in reality the younger brother, of the Shogun Yoshimasa. This family question of the Ashikaga became mixed up with other quarrels about the succession in two of the influential military families, Shiba and Hatakeyama. Other *shugo* of various provinces sided with this or that party, brought their liege-men to Kyoto, and turned the streets of the metropolis into a battle-field. Thus the most desultory civil war in our history was waged under the eyes of the Emperor and of the Shogun, neither of whom had any power to stop it. After the burning, plundering, and killing, carried on most ruthlessly for nine years, the street-fighting in Kyoto ceased, leaving almost no trace of the historical city of yore. The scenes of anarchy were then transferred to the provinces, and it took many years before the whole country became pacified. Nay, complete peace was not restored till the fall of the Ashikaga Shogunate itself. Such was one phase of the political disintegration of the age, and its result was that Japan was torn asunder into a number of semi-independent bodies, each with a *shugo* at its head.

If the process of the political decomposition of

the state had been limited to what is described above, then peace might have reigned at least within each of those bodies. Unfortunately, however, for the welfare of the people, none of these *shugo* was strong enough to keep order even within his own sphere of military jurisdiction. Most of them had lost their military character, having become accustomed to life in the capital, as stated above, and they left the care of their respective provinces in the hands of their protégés, men who soon made themselves independent of their patrons, so that there arose a number of minor political bodies in the jurisdiction of each *shugo*. Again these protégés, that is to say, the heads of the minor political bodies, were put down in turn by their vassals, and so forth. Moreover, some of these minor bodies were further divided into still smaller bodies, while others became aggrandised by annexation by the stronger of neighboring weaker ones. In this way Japan fell into a state of chaos, being an agglomeration of political bodies of various sizes, with masters ever changing, and with frontiers constantly shifting without any reference to the former administrative boundaries. This second phase completed the total disintegration of the empire.

The last of the Shoguns who tried to stem this irresistible tendency to disintegration was Yoshihisa, the son of Yoshimasa. His succession to his father, as has already been described, was the cause of the civil war of the Ohnin era, for which,

however, he was not responsible in the least, being only eight years old when he was invested with the Shogunate in the year 1473. He grew up, however, to be the most typical Shogun of all the Ashikaga. Though born in the highest of the military families, he had as his mother a daughter of a court-noble, and was educated in his boyhood by Kanera Ichijô, one of the most learned courtiers of the time. When Yoshihisa reached manhood, therefore, he was a courtier clad in military garments. He thought and acted as if he were a high Fujiwara noble, and even had his household managed by a courtier. Through this confidant, the proprietors *de jure* of manors, that is to say, courtiers, shrines, and temples, clung to the young Shogun, and pressed him to coerce, on their behalf, those arbitrary *shugo* and minor captains who dared impudently to appropriate the whole of the revenue from those manors to themselves, so that the share due to these proprietors *de jure* had been kept in arrears for many years. The Shogun was easily persuaded, and Takayori Sasaki, the *shugo* of the province of Ohmi, was first chosen as the object of chastisement, for his province was the nearest to Kyoto and abounded in those manors belonging to the courtiers and the like. It was in the year 1487 that Yoshihisa in person led a punitive expedition into Ohmi, crossed lake Biwa, and pitched his camp on its eastern shore. Contemporary chronicles unanimously describe in vivid

colours how the gallant and refined young prince, clad in bright military costume, marched out of Kyoto surrounded by a bizarre host of warriors and courtiers. The latter group, however, did not count for aught in warfare, while the former followed the Shogun only halfheartedly. It was especially so with those *shugo* who were of the same caste and of the same status as the attacked, and therefore did not like to see him crushed in the interest of the *de jure* but fainéant proprietors. The victory of the army of the Shogun was hopeless from the first. After staying two years in camp Yoshihisa died without being able to see his enemy vanquished. One of his cousins, who succeeded to the Shogunate, renewed the expedition, and at last ousted the disobedient *shugo* from his province, but the proprietors *de jure* of the manors could not regain their lost rights, what was due to them having been usurped by other new pretenders, not less arbitrary than their predecessors.

The expedition of Yoshihisa was an epoch-making event in the history of our country. To support by military power the courtiers, whose cup had already begun to run over and whose interests could not be always consistent with the welfare of the Shogunate, was evidently a quixotic attempt. Still it cannot be disputed that Yoshihisa fought at least for an ideal, however unrealisable it might have been. He reminds us of the scions of the Hohenstaufen who fought in

Italy for the imperial ideal traditional in their family. The failure of the expedition into Ohmi meant the utter impossibility of the restoration of the courtiers' prestige and the approach of the total disappearance of the manorial system from the islands of Japan. This is a mighty economical change for the empire, the importance of which could not be overvalued. The old régime initiated by the reform of the Taikwa was going down to its grave, and new Japan was beginning to dawn side by side with the momentous political disintegration of the country. We see, indeed, simultaneous with this political and economical change, the transformation of various factors of civilisation, preparing themselves for the coming age. The first turning of the wheel of history, however, depended on the political regeneration of the country by a master-hand.

CHAPTER IX

END OF MEDIAEVAL JAPAN

In order to see a nation consolidated, it is necessary not only to have a nucleus serving as a centre, towards which the whole nation might converge, but to have at the same time the centralising power of that nucleus strengthened sufficiently to hold the nation solid and compact. Moreover, the constituent parts of that nation ought to have the capacity to respond to the action emanating from that common centre or nucleus towards those parts, and facilitate the reciprocal relation between the centralising and the centralised. More than that. There must be formed strong links between those component parts themselves towards one another. For if each part be linked only to a common centre and estranged from other parts, then there is a great danger of the breaking asunder of the whole, however strong the centralising force of that nucleus might be, and in case of the debilitation of that sole centre, there might remain no other force alive to keep the constituent parts compactly together. To impart, however, the consolidating force to those component parts, they should be

instituted each as a separate organism. In other words, unless those parts constitute themselves each an an organic social and political body, provided with the power of acting within and without, they cannot form any close connection among themselves and with the central nucleus; and to be provided with such a power, or to become an organism, each part, too, must have in its turn its own nucleus, around which the rest of that part might converge. To speak summarily, for a strong centralisation there must be, besides one nucleus, or nucleus of the first order, a certain number of nuclei of the second or minor order, and sometimes there must be nuclei of the third and lower orders.

It might be deduced from what is said above that without a sufficient number of local centres, that is to say, without the existence of well-developed minor political organisms, the political centre, however powerful it might be, would not be able to hold a country together, lacking cohesion between those constituent parts. Japan had long been in such a disorderly state which continued until the middle of the Ashikaga period, that is to say, the middle of the fifteenth century. The political influence of Kamakura, though independent of Kyoto, was of very short duration, and Kyoto had continued on the whole as the sole political and social centre. If there had been in the provinces a place worthy to be called a city, besides Kamakura, it could only be sought in

Hakata on the northern coast of Kyushu. Other places were hardly to be termed cities, being but little more than sites of periodical fairs at the utmost. The growth of the cities of Sakai and Yamaguchi is of rather later origin, dating from the middle of the Ashikaga age. The Emperor, the Shogun, and one metropolitan city had dominated the whole of the country for a long time, so that, superficially observed, Japan could be said to have been superbly centralised, and therefore excellently unified. In reality, however, the prestige of the Emperor declined, as well as the military power of the Shogunate, and Kyoto, the site of the imperial court and of the military government, lost the political influence it once had possessed. After all, nothing was found influential enough in the earlier Ashikaga age to serve by itself as a means of solidifying the nation, while there had not yet been formed those minor provincial centres around which communities of lesser magnitude might crystallise. Manors, which were the remnants of the former ages, were of course a kind of agricultural communities, and could be considered as social and economical units, but they were politically dependent on their proprietors living in Kyoto or somewhere else outside of those manors, and in cultural respects most of the manors counted almost for nothing. All Japan was thus thrown into a state of chaos, when the military power of the Ashikaga Shogunate was reduced to impotence.

This chaotic period of Japanese history has been generally considered as the retrogressive age of our civilisation, quite in the same sense in which the medieval age in European history has come to be designated as the Dark Ages. It is a great mistake, however, to stigmatise the Ashikaga period as having witnessed no progress in any cultural factor, just as it has been a fatal misconception of early European historians to think that medieval Europe was indeed dark in every cultural respect. Though the classicism of the former ages might seem a civilisation of a far higher stage when compared with the vulgarised culture of the later, or so-called Dark Age, yet the vulgarisation should not be necessarily branded as a backward movement of civilisation. The vulgarisation at least accompanies a wider propagation, a deeper permeation, and the better adaptation to the real social condition of the time, and should not be looked down upon as an absolutely decadent process. In the seemingly anarchical period of the early Ashikaga, Japan had been undergoing, in sooth, an important change in social and cultural respects. Nay, even politically a change of mighty consequence was in course of evolution. Having reached an extreme state of disorder, a germ of fresh order was gradually forming itself out of necessity. That the *shugo* of this period held sway over a district far more extensive than the land held by any of the *shugo* of the Kamakura period, is in a sense a remark-

able political progress. Yamana, one of the most powerful of the Ashikaga shugo, is said to have possessed about one-sixth of the whole of Japan, and on that account was called Lord One-sixth. Such great feudatories were never possible in the Kamakura period. Most of these grand lords, though living mainly in Kyoto, as was stated in the previous chapter, had their provincial residences, which, too, were not so unpretentious as those of the *djito* of the Kamakura. Each lord maintained princely state, and around his court, a thriving social life must have grown up, making the beginning of the modern Japanese provincial towns. The governmental sites of the *daimyo* or feudatories of the Tokugawa period generally find the origin of their urban development in these residences of the *shugo* of the Ashikaga period.

The trade with China was another cause of the growth of modern Japanese cities, especially of those which are situated by the sea, such as Sakai, Osaka, Nagasaki, and this development of the maritime commercial cities led naturally to the general advancement of the humanistic culture of our country. Our intercourse with China, the fountain-head of the culture of the East, though it had been suspended between the governments since the end of the ninth century, had never been abandoned entirely, and merchant ships had continued to ply between the two countries almost without interruption. During the Kamakura Shogunate too, we have reason to suppose that

this steady intercourse livened into considerable activity and bustling profitable to both sides, China, at that epoch of our history, being governed by the Sung and the Yuan dynasties successively. Sanetomo, the second son of Yoritomo and the third Shogun in Kamakura, was said to have built a ship in order to cross over to that country. The port then trading with China was Hakata, and the privileged ships, which were limited in number, must have been under the care and protection of the Shogunate. Those ships carried on board not only commodities of exchange, but passengers also, who were mostly priests. Some of the ships even appear to have been sent solely for trade in behalf of certain Buddhist temples. In this we see again the singular coincidence between the histories of Europe and of Japan. The Levantine trade of the Italian cities in the age of the Crusades counted among its participators many churches and priests also. It is needless to say that those Japanese priests, who went abroad accompanying adventurous merchants and came back loaded with profound religious knowledge, did at the same time conspicuous service in promoting the general culture of our country. What was most remarkable, however, was that there were not a few Chinese Buddhists, who came over to this country and settled here. Their main purpose was of course to propagate the doctrine of the Zen sect, which had got the upper hand in China at that time. They were

cordially welcomed by the Shogunate, and later by the Imperial Court too, and were installed in the noted temples of Kamakura and Kyoto as chief priests, and besides their religious activities, these learned men contributed much toward the introduction of contemparary Chinese civilisation in general, in no less degree than did the Japanese priests. Among the various departments of knowledge which these priests imparted to the warriors and courtiers, one of the most important was instruction in the pure Chinese classics and in secular literature. There are still extant in our country not a small number of rare books printed in the Sung and the Yuan dynasty and imported hither at that time, and these manifest how rich in variety were the books then introduced to Japan. The founding of the famous library at Kanazawa near Kamakura, by a learned member of the Hôjô family in a time not far distant from that of the Mongolian invasion, may perhaps be attributed to the influence of some of these priests.

Without doubt the invasion of the Mongolian host put a momentary stop to this mutual intercourse. It seems, however, that the trade with China was revived soon after the war, and continued down to the time of the Ashikaga, without being interrupted materially even by the long civil war. Far from cessation or interruption, the official intercourse between the two states which had been broken off for some years was during

this civil war restored to its former amicable condition. It was while the internecine strife was raging over the whole of the island Empire, that a change of dynasty took place in China. The Mongols were driven away to their original abode in the desert, and in their place reigned in China the new dynasty of the Ming, founded by a general of Chinese blood. This founder of the Ming sent an embassy to Japan to announce the inauguration of his line and to secure the coast of his empire from inroads and pillage by Japanese pirates, who, since several centuries, had been ravaging the Korean and then the Chinese coast, and became especially rampant during the civil war, being let loose by the unexampled lawless state of our country. The ambassador of the Chinese emperor, however, could not at once reach Kyoto, which was his destination. For at that time in Kyushu ruled an imperial prince who was a scion of the branch antagonistic to that which reigned in the metropolis supported by the Ashikaga, and the prince-governor, as he was then the master of the historic trading port of Hakata, intercepted the Chinese ambasdor on his way, received him, and sent him back. This happened in the year 1369. Seven years afterwards this very prince sent an envoy to the Chinese government, perhaps with the object of obtaining some material assistance from beyond the sea, in order to make himself strong enough to overpower his enemy in Japan, the Ashikaga party. As the

sender was a prince of the blood imperial, the envoy sent by him seems to have been regarded as if he were the representative of the real government of Japan, and the intercourse between the two countries thus began to take official form again. When the civil war ended in the ultimate victory of the Ashikaga party and the annihilation of all its opponents, this international relation initiated by the prince of Kyushu was taken up by Yoshimitsu, the third Shogun of the Ashikaga, who sent an embassy to the Chinese government of the Ming in the year 1401. After this we see successive exchanges of embassies between the Chinese government and our Ashikaga Shogunate, the latter vouchsafing the orderliness of our trading people on the Chinese coast and promising to bridle the piratical activities of our adventurers, and the former giving in return munificent presents to the Shogunate. At that time what our forefathers suffered most from was the scarcity of coins, for although the beginning of the coinage in our country is so old that it has been lost in the remotest past, yet for a long period not enough care was exercised to provide the country with sufficient money in coins of different denominations to cover the necessities of the growing industries. No wonder that the presents of copper coins by the emperors of the Ming were gladly received by the Shogunate, and this Chinese money, together with that obtained by sale of our commodities, was in wide circulation throughout Japan,

many of them having remained to this day, and served as auxiliary coins. Among other things of Chinese provenance earnestly coveted by us, perhaps the most desired were books. Besides these two articles, copper coins and books, many rarities and useful commodities must have been imported by these ships, which carried the envoys on board, and rendered a not insignificant service in altering for the better the general ways of living of the people of our country.

The chief emporium of the trade with China in the early Ashikaga period was of course Hakata in Kyushu as before. As the family of the Ôuchi, however, held the strait of Shimonoseki, the gateway of the Inland Sea, and as Hakata itself came afterwards under the rule of the same family, the Chinese trade had been for a long time controlled or rather monopolised by this lord of the province of Nagato. The prosperity of the inland city of Yamaguchi, the residential seat of the Ôuchi family, is to be ascribed also to the same circumstance. Moreover, the growth of the port of Sakai in the easternmost recess of the Inland Sea owes its origin to the fact that the city was once under the lordship of the same Ôuchi, and a close historical connection was thereby created between it and the port of Shimonoseki. It was by the co-operation of many other political causes, however, that the centre of the foreign trade was shifted from Hakata to Sakai, and when intercourse with western nations was

opened, it was the latter and not the former, which became the staple market of import and export.

The growth of the Japanese cities, actuated by the political and commercial conditions of the country as stated above, is a phenomenon which had much to do with the progress of our civilisation in general. Notwithstanding the manifold drawbacks necessarily accompanying urban life, cities have been, since very ancient times, one of the most potent agents in the history of the East as well as of the West, in raising the general standard of culture to a high level. Rural life, whatever sonorous praise be chanted for it, would not have been able by itself to elevate the standard of manners and behaviour much above a blunt rustic naïveté. In this respect we can observe a remarkable difference between the Ashikaga and the preceding ages, a difference quite similar in nature to that which existed between the eleventh and the twelfth centuries in the history of Europe. The sudden increase, in Japan, of printed books in number and variety shows it more than clearly.

The history of printing in Japan goes back to the middle of the eighth century, but at the beginning the matter printed was limited to detached leaflets. What was printed the earliest in the form of a book and is still extant, bears the date of 1088. After that, however, very few books had been printed for a long time. Moreover, those few were exclusively religious. It was in

the year 1247 that one of the commentaries on the *Lun-yü*, the famous work of the teachings of Confucius, was put into a reprint, after the model of a contemporary Chinese edition, that is to say, of the Sung age. That this non-religious or non-Buddhist work was first edited in Japan in the middle of the Kamakura period, proves the enlargement of the circle of readers in Chinese classics by the participation of the warrior-class. Such editing of secular Chinese works, however, was discontinued for three-quarters of a century, and was not resumed until 1322, only ten years before the outbreak of the long civil war. The book printed at the latter date was after one of the Chinese editions of the *Shu-king*, another piece of Confucian literature. This was followed by the reprinting of many other non-religious Chinese works. The civil war too astonishes us not only in that it did not hinder the continuance of the reprints of useful Chinese originals, but also in that the number of books reprinted has suddenly increased in general since this period. Among the books issued during the war, a commentary on the *Lun-yü*, of a text different from that above mentioned, and said to have been made at Sakai, was the most remarkable. The edition was dated 1364, and reprinted again and again in several places. In this case the place where the printing was first undertaken demands also our attention. Hitherto almost all the books had been published in Kyoto, except some tomes of

Buddhist literature, which occasionally had been edited in the convents at Nara or Kôya. But now printing began to be undertaken not only in these historical and sacred places, but in purely commercial cities of quite recent growth, as Sakai. It is said that about this time several kinds of books of Chinese literature were edited in the city of Hakata, and that it was a naturalised Chinese who had started the undertaking there. Another tradition tells us that two Chinese block-engravers came and settled at Hakata, and engaged in their professional business, which contributed much to the increase of reprinted books. Shortly after the civil war, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, books were printed in other places more remotely situated in the provinces, such as Yamaguchi and Ashikaga. The last-named was the cradle of the Shogunate House of the Ashikaga, and there just at this time a college was founded, or according to some, restored, by Norizane Uyesugi, one of the most influential retainers of the Shogunate in eastern Japan. Thus, in the latter half of the fifteenth century, the reprinting of Chinese classics became a fashion throughout the empire. In addition to the ever-increasing number of books reprinted at Kyoto and Sakai, we find now those printed at places as far remote as Kagoshima in the west. In the east there seems to have lived in the neighborhood of Odawara, a new political centre, at least one engraver, engaged in block-cutting for books.

Summing up what has been stated above, the increase of the number of book-editing localities meant the increase of minor cultural centres in the provinces, that is to say, the wider diffusion of civilisation in the empire.

Another important fact to be specially noticed is that the varieties of books reprinted became gradually multifarious. Though those books printed in the Ashikaga age were mostly reproductions of Chinese works, and very few purely Japanese books were edited until the end of the age, yet those Chinese works themselves, which were reprinted, became more and more diversified in kind. Not only Buddhist and Confucian classics, and works of purely literary character, especially poetical works and books on versification, but several medical works also were reprinted and issued in the later Ashikaga age. The study of medicine had been revived since the civil war by the intercourse with China, and soon after the war, some Japanese students went abroad to learn the science there. The reprinting of medical books, therefore, was to be considered as a token of the growing necessity for medical students ever increasing in our country, and the beginning of the revival of scientific education.

As to the works of Japanese authors which were put into print, the first publication seems to have been that of religious treatise in Chinese by the priest Hônen, printed at the beginning of the Kamakura period, and the work was many

times reprinted afterwards. Another work by the same priest, which was written in Japanese, was issued at the end of the same period. During the civil war numerous works, mostly in Chinese, by the Japanese Zen priests were published, among which the history of Buddhism in Japan, entitled the *Genkô-shakusho,* was the most noteworthy, and was therefore reprinted over and over again. A chronological table of the history of Japan, and two editions of the Jôyei Laws were subsequently printed. A text-book for children, to train them in the use of Chinese ideographs, was first printed at the close of the Ashikaga period, and the demand for the appearance of such a book proves that the education of children began to arouse the general attention.

From what is said above, we can safely conclude that during the course of the Ashikaga period, the level of civilisation of our country had been raised in a marked degree, and that at the same time there arose one after another numerous cultural centres in the provinces, which were in their main features nothing but Kyoto on a small scale, but nevertheless contributed not the least to the betterment of national civilisation in general owing to their common rivalry. One would perhaps entertain some doubt as to the veracity of the assertion, that in an age such as of the Ashikaga, when political anarchy was in full play, so remarkable an advancement had been steadily achieved by our forefathers. If he would, how-

ever, look at the history of the Italian renaissance, then he would not be at a loss to see that political disorder does not necessarily thwart the progress of civilisation, but on the contrary often stimulates it.

The territories owned by great feudatories or *daimyo* in the Ashikaga age were by no means compact entities definitely bounded. Their frontiers constantly shifted to and fro according to frequently recurring waxings and wanings in strength of this or that *daimyo,* and these fluctuations depended, in their turn, on the results sometimes of petty skirmishes and sometimes of political intrigues, so that an unwavering steadiness was the least thing to be expected at that time. This politically unsettled condition of Japan, however, was in a certain sense a boon to our country, for it took away all the hindrances which lay in the way of internal communication, and paved the path to the ultimate political unity of the empire. I do not say of course that travelling at that time was quite safe from any kind of molestation, but the main obstacles to communication were rather of a social than of a political nature. In other words, they were of kinds which could not be got rid of in a like stage of civilisation, even if Japan had been politically not dismembered, and adventurous merchants did not shrink from facing such difficulties. No need to speak of those piratical traders, who went out from the western islands and the coastal regions

of the Inland Sea on their devastating errands to the Korean and the Chinese coasts. The less warlike merchants ventured to trade with the Ainu, who had retired into the island of Hokkaidô, and had not been heard of since the beginning of the Ashikaga period.

Among the itinerants travelling a long distance may be counted the professional literati also, the experts in the art of composing the *renga,* the short Japanese poems. They went about throughout the provinces, visiting feudal lords in their castles, teaching them the literary pastimes, thus imparting their first lesson in æsthetic education to those who had never tasted it. Courtiers, too, weakminded as they were, travelled great distances, to call on some rich bourgeois or powerful *daimyo,* who were thinking of becoming their munificent patrons, and taught them, besides the afore-said art of composing Japanese poems, the sport of kicking leather balls and other leisurely pastimes which had been the favourites among the courtiers in Kyoto, and received in return a generous hospitality and fees for the lessons which they gave. Buddhist priests were the third set of busy travellers of the time. Missionary activities had not much relaxed since the Kamakura period, though no influential sect had been started in this age. Every nook and corner of the island empire had received the footprints of these religious itinerants, and some of the more enterprising priests even crossed the sea to the island

of what is now Hokkaido in order to preach to the Ainu dwelling there. Pilgrims to the shrines of Ise, where the ancestress of the Imperial line was enshrined, may also be counted among the busy interprovincial travellers.

All these wanderers served not only to transmit to distant provincial towns the culture engendered and nourished in the metropolis, but also to make the intercourse between the minor cultural centres more intimate than before, so as to spread a civilisation of a uniform standard and nature throughout the whole of the empire. Japan was thus for the first time unified in her civilisation in order to prepare herself for a solid political unification.

Let me repeat that Japan of the Ashikaga age had within herself no constant political boundaries nor any other artificial barriers to impede the people of one province nor of the territory of one *daimyo* from going to another province or the territory of another *daimyo,* and this, in a great measure, facilitated communications between the inhabitants of different provinces. The fact that the college at Ashikaga in eastern Japan was, notwithstanding its insufficient accommodation, thronged with pupils from various parts of the country, even from a province so far off from Kyoto as Satsuma, proves that bad roads and poor means of conveyance did not obstruct the Japanese of that time from traversing great distances in order to get a liberal education, and

such activity and lively traffic would naturally tend to the formation of big emporiums here and there within the empire. Unfortunately the geographical features of our country did not allow it to see a great number of such large commercial cities formed within it, as the Hanseatic towns had been formed in medieval Germany, although we find very close resemblances between Germany of the twelfth and of the thirteenth century and Japan under the Ashikaga régime as regards their political conditions. The only one of the Japanese cities which had ever attained such a height of prosperity as to be fairly matched with the free cities of the Hansa was Sakai in the province of Idzumi.

The city of Sakai, as its name, which means in the Japanese tongue "the Boundary," denotes, was situated just on the boundary line of the two adjoining provinces Settsu and Idzumi, and at the quondam estuary of the river Yamato. The frontier-line, however, and the course of the river, were afterwards changed, so that the city is now entirely included within the province of Idzumi, and there is no river running near the city. The fact that it was once a border town shows that it could never have been the seat of the provincial government. Neither had it ever been the residence of any powerful feudal lord during the whole military régime. Moreover, nature has bestowed no special favour on the city. The bay of Sakai is very widely open, affording no pro-

tection against the west wind. In addition to that, it has been very shallow since old times. Even in an undeveloped stage of ship-building, the port was unfit for the mooring of vessels of a size as large as the junks trading with China were at that time, so that they had to be equipped somewhere else in a neighbouring harbour, and then brought and anchored far off from the shore in the bay of Sakai. The only geographical advantage of the port lay in the fact that the shortest sea-route to the island of Shikoku started thence. The first impulse to the development of the city seems to have been given during the civil war, for it was the nearest access to the sea for one of the parties which had its stronghold in the mountainous region of the province of Yamato, adjacent to Idzumi. At the end of the war, the port came, as before stated, under the rule of the family of Ôuchi, and from Ôuchi it passed into the hands of the family of Hosokawa, also one of the chief vassals of the Ashikaga Shogunate, holding the north-eastern part of the island of Shikoku, and Sakai serving the family always as the landing-place of its followers, when they were on their way to Kyoto, to pay their respects to the Shogun or to fight there for their own interests. On account of this usefulness the harbour-city of Sakai had been granted privileges by the hereditary chief of the Hosokawa, as a recompense for the assistance given by the merchants of the city, and those same privileges, in

extent, amounted to almost as much as the municipal freedom enjoyed by the free cities of Europe. The administration of the city was in the hands of a few wealthy merchants, and was rarely interfered with by its feudal lord. Among the merchants there were ten, at first, who monopolised the municipal government, each of them being very rich as the proprietors of certain storehouses on the beach, the rents of which paid them a good income. In the later Ashikaga age, however, we hear the names of the thirty-six municipal councillors of Sakai. This increase in the number might perhaps have been the result of the growth in opulence of the citizens. In short, though the city had been under the oligarchical rule of the wealthy merchants of the city, like Venice and Florence in medieval Italy, yet it was none the less autonomous, which is quite an exceptional case in the whole course of the history of our country.

The golden age of the city of Sakai dates from the year 1476 or thereabouts, when a squadron trading with China first sailed out from the harbour. Until that time all the vessels plying between this country and China used to set out from Hakata or from Hyogo, which is nearly the same thing as Kobe. Although the adventurous merchants of Sakai carried their trade before this time as far as the islands of Loo-choo, and often participated in the Chinese trade also, yet no vessel had ever started from there for China till

then. That Sakai became at this date a chief trading port dealing with China might presumably have been owing to the intercession of its hereditary lord Hosokawa, but the determining cause of this assumption of such an honourable position among the commercial cities of Japan must have been the indisputable superiority of the material strength of the city. Many of the higher vassals of the Shogunate borrowed money from the merchants of Sakai in order to equip their soldiers. Nay, even the Shogunate itself had often to mortgage its landed estates to the merchants of the city in order to save its treasury from running short. The wealth of the citizens enabled them to fortify their city very strongly, by surrounding it with a deep moat, and to enlist into their service a great number of knights-errant, who abounded in Japan at that time. These, together with the consciousness of indispensable assistance rendered to the Shogunate, to various great feudatories and condottieri, emboldened the citizens to defy the otherwise formidable military powers, and those warriors, on the other hand, who owed much to the pecuniary aid of the Sakai merchants, could but treat the latter with great consideration, which was unwonted at that time. Although the citizens of Sakai were not entirely free from the sufferings of the war, for they had often to quarter soldiers in their houses, yet no battle was allowed to be fought within the city, notwithstand-

ing that a most sanguinary war was raging all around in the empire.

It was natural, therefore, that, after the civil war of the Ohnin era, Sakai should be considered safer to live in than Kyoto. Sakai became the asylum for the civilisation of Japan, to save it from utter destruction. Poets, painters, musicians, and singers, who had found living in the turbulent metropolis intolerably hard, sought shelter in Sakai, and there occupied themselves quietly with their own professions. Various handicrafts, such as lacquering, porcelain-making, and weaving were all started there with enormous success. Especially as to the weaving, it is said that this industry, which had once flourished and been afterwards abandoned in Kyoto on account of the political disturbances there, was not only continued at Sakai, but also improved by the Chinese weavers, who repaired to the city and taught the natives the art of making various costly textiles of Chinese invention. In some respects the textiles of the Nishijin, now one of the specialties of Kyoto, may be said to be the continuation of the Sakai looms.

Another kind of industry, which developed in the city in the later Ashikaga period, was the manufacture of fire-arms. Immediately after the introduction of fire-arms by a Portuguese in the year 1541, a merchant of Sakai happened to learn the art of making guns somewhere or other in Kyushu, and after his return to the city he began

to practise there the business he had learnt. Sakai thus became the origin of the propagation, in central and eastern Japan, of the use of the new arm.

From what has been described above, the reader would easily understand that the intellectual level of the citizens of Sakai stood much higher than that of the average Japanese of that time. Wit and pleasantry were the accomplishments highly prized there, so that the city produced out of its inhabitants a large number of versatile diplomatists, story-tellers, and buffoons. As their economic conditions were very easy, the social life of the city was polished, enlightened, and even luxurious. The manufacture of saké, the Japanese favourite drink made from rice, was highly developed in the city, and the fame of the Sakai-tub was renowned the country round. To protect the brewers, the Shogunate issued an order forbidding the importation of saké into the city. The tea-ceremony and the flower-trimming, two fashionable pastimes already in vogue at that time, were eagerely practised here by wealthy merchants. Many famous experts in this sort of amusement were found among the inhabitants of the city, and they were generally connoisseurs highly skilled in the fine arts, as Sen-no-Rikyû, for example. Various curios, native and foreign, were bought and sold there at exorbitant high prices.

The prosperous condition of the city induced

many Buddhists, especially the priests of the Jôdo-shinshû, the most active sect of Japanese Buddhism at that time, to try their propaganda in the city. They had numerous temples built, and by lending to the merchants their influence at the Shogun's court obtained from it the privilege of trading with China, thus making common cause with the citizens of that port. The earlier Christian missionaries, too, endeavoured to make this city the centre of their movement. It was indeed at the end of the year 1550, that Francis Xavier, who was not only the greatest missionary whom Japan has ever received from the West, but also one of the greatest men in the world too, arrived at the city from Yamaguchi on his way to Kyoto. Though he could achieve nothing noteworthy during his short stay here, on account of illness, yet by him the first seed of Christianity was sown in the central regions of the empire, and ten years later the first Christian hymn was sung in the church founded in the city.

The civilisation of the city of Sakai represented that of the whole empire in the later Ashikaga age, manifested in its most glaring colours. The essential character of the civilisation was not aristocratic, but bourgeois. The lower strata of the people still had nothing to do with it. It is true that we can recognise already at this period the beginning of the proletariat movement. The frequent disturbances raised by apaches in the streets of Kyoto and the insurrections of agri-

cultural workers in the provinces, remind us of the Peasants' War in the time of the Reformation in Europe. Their demands as well as their connection with the religious agitation of the time closely resembled those of the followers of Goetz von Berlichingen. They could not, however, secure any permanent result by their insurrections, so that the character of the civilisation remained essentially bourgeois, not having suffered any marked change from those disturbances.

The civilisation of the bourgeois cannot but be individualistic, and its main difference from that of the aristocracy lies also herein. It has been so in Europe, and it could not have been otherwise in our country. The fact that individualism got the upper hand in the Ashikaga age may be proved by a phenomenon in the history of Japanese art. Portrait-painting had made some progress already in the Kamakura period, as was stated in the foregoing chapter. The artistic development in this branch of painting made it independent of religious pictures. The portrait-paintings of the age, however, even those executed by such eminent masters as Takanobu and Nobuzane, are only images of the typical courtier or warrior, not to mention the stiffness of the style. Very little of the individuality of the persons represented was manifested in them. The scroll-paintings, to which the attention of most of the artists of the age was directed, contained pictures of many persons, but to depict scenes was the chief

aim of scroll-paintings, so that no serious pains were taken in the delineation of individuals. That portrait-painting remained thus long in an undeveloped stage cannot be explained away simply by the tardiness of the progress of arts in general. The chief cause must be attributed to the fact that the contemporary civilisation was lacking in individualistic elements. Unless there is a rise of the individualistic spirit in a certain measure, no real progress in portraiture can be expected.

In the Ashikaga period, a large number of scroll-paintings had been produced as before, but they were mostly inferior in quality to those of the preceding age. On the other hand, we notice a vast improvement in the portrait-painting of this period. It may be due to some extent to the influence of the Zen sect, the sect which prevailed among the upper class of that time, for its creed is said to be strongly individualistic. Mainly, however, it must have come from the general spirit of the age, which, though it could not be said to have been free from the influence of the same sect, was induced to become individualistic more by social and economical reasons than by religious ones. By painters of the schools of Tosa and Kano were painted numerous portraits of eminent personages, such as the Shogun, courtiers, great feudatories, priests, especially of the Zen sect, literati, artists, experts in tea-ceremony, and so forth. Their pictures were generally

made after death by order of the near relatives, friends, vassals or disciples of the deceased, to be a memorial of the person whom they adored or revered. Not a small number of those paintings are extant to this day, showing vividly the characteristics of those illustrious figures in Japanese history.

The political anarchy combined with the individualistic tendency of the age could not fail to lead to the moral dissolution of the people. To the same effect, too, the literature of the time, which was a revival of that of the Fujiwara period, contributed. The classical authors of Japanese literature at the height of the Fujiwara period were now perused, commented upon, and elucidated with devouring eagerness, the most adored among them being Murasaki-Shikibu, whose famous novel, *Genji-monogatari,* was regarded mystically and held to be almost divine. The nature of this literature was for the most part realistic, or rather sentimental, verging sometimes on sensuality. It was, however, clad in the exquisitely refined costume of beautiful diction and choice turns of phrase, borrowed or metamorphosed from the inexhaustible stores of Chinese literature. As to the revived form of literature in the Ashikaga period, the difference between it and that of the old time was so remarkable, that it could not be overlooked. Vulgarisation usurping the place of refinement, and coarse sensuality reigning rampant was the outcome of the culti-

vation of the classical literature. The moral tone of the stories and novels produced in this decadent age unmistakably reflects how low was the ebb of the sense of decency of that period, fostered by the naturalistic tendency manifested in the Fujiwara classics.

These depict the dark side of the age, but in order not to be one-sided in my judgment, let me tell also about its bright side. The culture of the Ashikaga had from the beginning a trend to grow more and more humanistic as it approached the end of the period. One more aspect in the history of Japanese painting proves it to the full. Landscapes and still-life pictures, which had been formerly painted only as the accessories of religious images or as the background in the scroll paintings, before which the main subjects, that is to say, the personages in stories were made to play, began now to form by themselves each a special independent group of subjects for painting. This shows that the people of the time had already entered a cultural stage able to enjoy the arts for art's sake. Many pictures of such a kind by the brush of noted Chinese masters were imported into our country, and several clever Japanese artists also painted after them. Some of our artists, like Sesshû, went over to China to study the art of painting there. The differentiation of the school of Kano from the older Tosa was another result of this development. Most of these pictures were executed in the form of *kakemono*,

or hanging pictures, so called from their being hung in a special niche of a drawing room or a study. Screens, or *byobu,* mounted with pictures, became also a fashion. In general, the furnishing of a house was now a matter of a certain educated taste, and various systems were devised and formulated by accomplished experts.

The delicacy of the æsthetic sense in indoor-life was moreover enhanced by the laborious etiquette of fashionable tea-parties held by aristocrats and bourgeois alike. The tea-plant itself is said to have been introduced from China into our country in the reign of the Emperor Saga, that is to say, at the beginning of the ninth century. Its use, however, as the daily beverage was of a far later date. Yôsai, the founder of the Zen sect in Japan, wrote in the early Kamakura period a commendation on tea as the healthiest drink of all. Still, for a long while after him, tea seems to have been used exclusively by Buddhists as a tonic. It was in the Ashikaga age that tea came first into general use among the well-to-do classes of the people. As the production of it was, however, not so abundant as now, it was not used daily as at present, but occasionally, with an etiquette conducted with exquisitely refined taste, both hosts and guests rivalling one another in displaying their artistic acquirements by delivering extempore speeches in criticism of the various articles of art exhibited, or in amusing themselves

with mystic dialogues of the Zen creed, or the lively exchange of witty repartees.

After all, the tendency of the culture of the later Ashikaga period was in the main humanistic. There was no political authority so firmly constituted, nor were conventional morals of the time so rigorous, as to be able to put an effective check on any liberal thinker, nor to intervene in the daily life of the people. Thought and action in Japan has never been more free than in that age. That Christianity could find innumerable converts from one end of the empire to the other within half a century after its introduction, may be accounted for by supposing that the ground for it had been prepared long before by this exceedingly humanistic culture. In this respect we see the dawn of modern Japan already in the later Ashikaga age. What a striking similarity to the Italian renaissance! Japan was now in the throes of travail—the time for a new birth was fast approaching. Conditions on the whole were favourable. All that was wanted for this were the moral regeneration of the people and the political reconstruction of the Empire.

CHAPTER X

THE TRANSITION FROM MEDIAEVAL TO MODERN JAPAN

ANARCHY engendered peace at least. At the end of the Ashikaga Shogunate the minor territorial lords, who had sprung up out of the impotency of the Shogun, were swallowed up one after another by the more powerful ones. The rights of manorial holders, that is to say, of court-nobles, shrines, and temples, over estates legally their own, though long since fallen into a condition of semi-desuetude, were active, sensitive, yet powerful enough in the middle of the period to withstand the attempted encroachments of those territorial lords, who were *de jure* only managers of the estates entrusted to their care; but those rights began in course of time to lose their enforcing power, and were finally set at naught by the all-powerful military magnates. The link between the estates and their proprietors was thus virtually cut off, and each territory, which was in truth an agglomeration of several estates, came to stand as one body under the rule of a military lord, without any reservation to his right. In other words, each territory became a domain of

a lord pure and simple, and it may be best explained by imagining a quasi-sovereign state in Europe formed by joining together a certain number of ecclesiastical domains, the lands of which were contiguous. It is true that the size of such territories varied, ranging from one so big as to contain several provinces down to petty ones comprising only a few villages; their boundaries, too, shifted from time to time. Notwithstanding this diversity in size and the inconstancy of the frontier-lines, these territories were similar to one another in their main nature, no more complicated by intricate manorial systems. If, therefore, there appeared at once some irrresistable necessity for national unification or some great historical figure, whose ability was equal to the task of achieving the work, Japan could now be made a solid national state far more easily than at any earlier period.

Besides this facilitation of the political unity, what most contributed to the settling of the general order was the resuscitation of the moral sense of the nation. The highly advanced Chinese civilisation introduced into our country at a time when it was comparatively naïve, had an effect which could not be termed exactly in all respects wholesome. The morals of the people, whose mode of life was simplicity itself, not having yet tasted the sumptuousness of civilised life, excelled those of higher civilised nations in veracity, soberness, and courage. Lacking, however, in the firm con-

sciousness which must accompany any virtue of a standard worthy of sincere admiration, these attributes of the ancient Japanese, though laudable in themselves, could have no high intrinsic value, and were inadequate to stem the enervating influence of the elegantly developed alien civilisation introduced later on into the country. The ethical ties, which are indispensable at any time for maintaining the social order in a healthy condition, were gradually reduced to a state of utter dissolution in the later or over-refined stage of the Fujiwara period, especially among the upper classes. With the attainment of political power by the warrior class in the formation of the Kamakura Shogunate, there shimmered once some hope of the reawakening of the moral spirit, for fidelity and gratitude, which were the cardinal virtues of the Kamakura warriors, were efficient factors in refreshing and invigorating a society which had once fallen into a despicable languor and demoralisation. The ascendency of these bracing forces, however, was but transitory. This disappointment came not only from the shortness of the duration of the genuine military régime at Kamakura, but also from another reason not less probable. The admirable virtues of the warriors were the natural outcome of the peculiar private circumstances created in the fighting bodies of the time, and were on that account essentially domestic in their nature. As long as these warriors remained, therefore, mere professional fighters and

tools in the hands of court nobles, the moral ties binding leaders and followers as well as the *esprit de corps* among these followers themselves had very slight chance of coming into contact with politics. In short, the majority of these warriors were not acquainted with public life at all, so that they were at a loss how to behave themselves as public men when, as the real masters of the country, they found themselves obliged to deal with political affairs. Public affairs are generally prone to induce men even of high probity to put undue importance upon the attainment of end, rather than to make them scrupulous about the means of arriving at that end; and if the moral sense of the people is not developed enough to guard against this injurious infection of private life from the meddling with public affairs, then their inborn and yet untried virtues may often fail to assert themselves against the influence of the depravity which can find its way more easily into public than into private life. Such was the case with the warriors of the Kamakura age. Through their ascendency the martial spirit of the nation, which had languished somewhat under the rule of the Fujiwara nobles, was once more revived, but their descendants at the end of that Shogunate could not be so brave and simple-hearted as their forefathers were. The extinction of the Minamoto family, too, relieved these warriors of their duty as hereditary liegemen of the Shogun, for henceforth both the Shogun, who

was now of a different family from that of the Minamoto, and the Hôjô, the real master of the Shogunate, were to them superiors only in official relations. This disappearance of the object on which the fidelity of the warriors used to concentrate, made fidelity itself an empty virtue. At least among the circle of warriors in the age in which fidelity was everything and all other virtues were but ancillary to it, this loss must have been a great drawback to the improvement of the morality of the nation. The demoralisation of the influential class had thus set in since the latter part of the Kamakura age. No wonder that during the civil war which ensued many of the prominent warriors changed sides very frequently, almost without any hesitation, obeying only the dictates and suggestions of their private interests. That this civil war, which ended without any decisive battle being fought, could drag on for nearly a century, may be best understood by taking this recklessness of the participants into consideration. The inconsistency in their attitude or the want of fidelity towards those to whom they ought to be faithful was not restricted to their transactions in public affairs only, but extended also to the recesses of their family life. Parents could no more confide in their own children, nor husband in his wife, and masters had always to be on guard against betrayal by their servants. After the civil war there were many periods of intermittent peace in the first half of the Ashi-

kaga régime, but that was not a result of the firm and strong government of the Shogun. They were rather lulls after storms, brought about by the weariness felt after a long anarchy.

The culmination of this deplorable condition of national demoralisation falls to the epoch of the next civil war, that is to say, of the Ohnin era. It is in this period that we witness a great development of the spy system and of the usage of taking hostages as a security against breach of faith. Even such means, however, proved often inefficient to guard against the unexpected treachery of supposed intimate friends, or a sudden attack from the rear by trusted neighbours. Desertion, though not recommended as a laudable action, was nevertheless not considered a detestable infamy, especially when it was carried out anterior to the pitching of the camps against the enemy, and deserters or betrayers were generally welcomed and loaded with munificent rewards by their new masters. Was it possible that such a ruthless state could continue for long without any counteraction? If any one had once betrayed his first master for the sake of selfish interests, could he claim after that to be a sort of person able to enjoy the implicit confidence of his second master? Examples of repeated breaches of faith abound in the history of the time. It was from the general unreliableness caused by such habitual acts of treachery, that the practice of giving quarter to deserters and facile surrenderers began

gradually to diminish. And the result was that the danger of being killed after having surrendered or capitulated became a cause to induce those warriors, who would otherwise have easily given up their master's cause, to remain true to him to the end. This is one of the reasons why, after so long a domination of this miserable demoralisation, we begin frequently to come upon those beautiful episodes which showed the solidarity of clans admirably maintained and the utter loyalty of vassals to their lord, fighting to the death under his banner. The process, however, of ameliorating the morals of the nation should not begin from the relation of master and servant, but slowly start from within families. One could not refrain from feeling the imperative necessity of trustworthy mutual dependence among members connected by ties of blood, amidst the dreary environs in which no hearty confidence could be put in any one with safety. That the *Hsiao-king*, a Chinese moral book treating of the merits of filial piety, was widely read in educated circles of the time, and that several editions of the same book have been published since the middle of the Ashikaga period, show how great a stress was put on the encouragement of domestic duties. With the family, made a compact body, as the starting point, the reorganisation of social and national morals was thus set on foot. The growth of the tendency of liegemen to share the same fate as their lord is to be looked upon as a kind of

extension of this family solidarity, as it came not from the consideration of the mere relation between a master and his servants, but rather from that of the hereditary transmittal of such a relation on both sides, just as it was at the beginning of the Kamakura Shogunate. There was no doubt therefore that the smaller the size of the territory of a lord, the easier the consummation of the process of its compact consolidation, which was necessarily cemented by a close mutual attachment between the lord of that territory and his dependents within and without his family. Not only that. If that territory was small and weak, and in constant danger of being destroyed or annexed by powerful neighbours, then the same process of consolidation was effected very swiftly. The territory in the province of Mikawa, which was owned by the family of the Tokugawa, was one of many such instances. This territory was so small in size, that it did not cover more than a half of the province, and moreover it was surrounded by the domains belonging to the two powerful families of Oda and Imagawa on the west and east, so that the small estate of the Tokugawa family was constantly harassed by them, and maintained as a protectorate now by the one and then by the other of the two. On that account nowhere else was there a stronger demand for a close affinity between a territorial lord and his men, than in this domain of the Tokugawa's. Consequently we see there not only

an early progress in territorial consolidation, but along with it the resuscitation of an acute moral sense, especially in the direction necessary and compatible to the maintenance and development of a military state.

The reawakening of the high moral sense in the nation and the formation of compact self-constituted territories, virtually independent but amply liable to the influence of unifying forces, were the phenomena in the latter half of the Ashikaga period. That the country was slow in becoming nationalised and unified must be attributed to the insufficiency of that reawakening and the insolidity of those quasi-independent territories. The general culture of the time, which was humanistic in nature, was powerless for the moment to facilitate this movement which was national and moral at the same time. Humanistic as it was, it was able to pervade the provinces, and gave to Japan a uniform colour of culture. That was already, indeed, a stride forward on the way to national unification. Nay, it may be said that the impulse to that very unification was given by that very culture. Generally, however, the humanistic culture of any form has no particular state of things as its practical goal, and therefore cannot necessarily lead to an improvement in the morals of any particular nation, nor does it always stimulate the desire for the national unification of a certain country. On the contrary, it often counteracts these movements,

and seemingly contributes toward accelerating the demoralisation and dismemberment of a nation, for individualism and selfishness get often the upper hand when such a culture becomes ascendant. The fruit which the Renaissance of the Quattrocento bore to Italians was just of this sort, and the direct influence which the humanistic culture of the later Ashikaga produced on Japan was not very much different from that. The culture, which had spread widely all over Japan, rather tended to loosen moral ties, and at least diminished the social stability. Persons, of a character morally most depraved, such as traitors, murderers, and so forth, were not infrequently men of high culture. Most of the rebellious servants of the Ashikaga Shogun were said to have been highly-accomplished literati. Some of them were addicted to the perusal of the sensational novels produced in the golden age of classical literature in Japan, such as the *Ise-* and the *Genji-monogatari,* and others were composers of short poems fashionable in those days, rejoicing at their own display of flighty wit, while not a few of them were liberal patronisers of the contemporary art, especially of painting. What a striking parallelism to those Popes and their nephews, in the time of the Renaissance, whose patronising of arts is as renowned as their atrocious vices!

If the culture inborn or borrowed from China was unable to save the country from a moral and political crisis, what was the fruit borne by the

seeds of the new exotic culture, that is to say, of Christianity, sown just at this juncture? I will not dilate here on the relation between religion and morality in general. Suffice it to say that religious people are not always virtuous. Bigots are generally men of perverse character, and mostly vicious. This is a truism. It has been so with Buddhism and many other religions. Why should it be otherwise only in the case of Christianity? As regards the general culture of our country, the introduction of Christianity is a very important historical fact, the influence of which can by no means be overlooked. Though the secular culture which was introduced into Japan as the accessory of the Christian propaganda was of a very limited nature, and though the free acceptance of it was cut short soon after its circulation, yet this new element of civilisation brought over by the missionaries was much more than a drop in the ocean. However difficult it be to perceive the traces of the Western culture in the spirit of the age which was to follow, it cannot be denied that it left, after all, some indelible mark on our national history. That it had spread within a few decades all over the contemporary Japan, from the extreme south to the furthest north, should also not be left out of sight. Thenceforth the Fables of Æsop have not ceased to be told in the lamplit hours in the nurseries of Japan. We see Japan, after the first introduction of Christianity, painted in a somewhat different

colour, though the difference of tincture may be said to be extremely slight. The knowledge at least that there were outside of China, many people in the far West, civilised enough to teach us in several branches of science and art, opened the eyes of the island nation to a wider field of vision, and began to alter the views which we had entertained about things Chinese. Previously, for anything to become authoritative, it had been enough if the Chinese origin of that thing could be assured. The overshadowing influence which China had wielded over Japan at the time of the Fujiwara régime was revived in different form in the middle Ashikaga period, the former being China of the T'ang, while the latter that of the Sung, Yuan, and Ming. In short, China had long continued as a too brilliant guiding star to the Japanese mind, Korea, by the way, having been regarded only as one of the intermediaries between the "flowery" Empire and our country. It would be, of course, a hasty judgment to conclude that the introduction of Christianity instantly let the scales fall from the eyes of the Japanese as regards China, and aroused thereby a fervent national enthusiasm of the people, but at least it was a strong impetus to the awakening of the national consciousness, and led indirectly to the political unification of the country. In this respect the introduction of the new religion had a salutary effect on our history.

As to the betterment of the individual morals

of the contemporary Japanese, however, the influence of Christianity cannot be said to have been wholesome in all ways. It probably did as much mischief as good during its brief prosperity. Any cult, which may be styled a universal religion, contains a strong tincture of individualism in its doctrines, and any creed of which individualism is a main factor often easily tends to encourage, against its original purpose, the pursuit of selfish objects. In this respect even Christianity can offer no exception. What, then, could it preach, at the end of the Ashikaga régime, to the Japanese who were already individualistic enough without the new teaching of the western religion, besides the intensifying of that individualism to make it still more strong and prevalent? Moreover, the very moral doctrine of the Christianity introduced by Francis Xavier and his successors was nothing but the moral of the Jesuits of the sixteenth century, who maintained the unscrupulous teaching that the end justified the means, the moral principle which has been universally adjudged in Europe to be a very dangerous and obnoxious doctrine. Could it have been otherwise only in our country as an exceptional case? But if these missionaries had all been men of truly noble and upright character, they should have been able perhaps to raise the standard of our national morals by personal contact with the Japanese, notwithstanding the moral tenets of their religion. Unfortunately, however, most of

them were of debased character, with the exception of St. Francis Xavier and a few others. We need not doubt the ardent desire of these missionaries to save the "souls" of the Japanese, and thus to recover in the East what they had lost in the West. But by whatever motive their pious undertakings may have been prompted, their religious enthusiasm and their dauntless courage do not confute the charge of dishonesty. That the majority of them were grossest liars is evident from their reports addressed to their superiors in Europe, in which the numbers of converts and martyrs in this country were misrepresented and ridiculously exaggerated, in order bombastically to manifest their undue merits, exaggeration which could not be attributed to a lack of precise knowledge about those matters. What could we expect from men of such knavish characters as regards the moral regeneration of the contemporary Japanese?

As these missionaries, however, were at least cunning, if not intelligent in a good sense, it would not have been impossible for them to achieve something in the domain of the moral education of the nation, if they could only have understood the real state of Japan of that time. On the contrary, their comprehension of our country and of our forefathers was far wide of the mark. Most of them had expected to find in Japan an El Dorado inhabited by primitive folks of a very low grade of intelligence, where they could play

their parts gloriously as missionaries by preaching the Gospel in the wilderness. They had not dreamt that the culture possessed by the Japanese of that time, though for the most part borrowed from China, was superior to that of some still uncivilised parts of Europe, for the difference in the form of civilisation deceived them in their judgment of the value of Eastern culture. When they set their feet on Japanese soil, therefore, they soon discovered that they had been grossly mistaken, and then running to the opposite extreme they fell into the error of overestimation. Yet they did not stop at this. This first misconception on the part of the missionaries about Japan left in them an ineradicable prejudice. They became very niggards in seeing things Japanese in an impartial light, and constituted themselves consciously or unconsciously fault-finders of the people, and unfortunately the Japan of that time furnished them with much material to corroborate their low opinion. The result was that while on the one hand the Japanese were praised far above their real value, they were stigmatised equally far below their real merits. Regrettable as it was for Japan to have received such reprehensible people as pioneers of Western civilisation, it was also pitiable that Christianity, which had been fervently embraced by a large number of Japanese, was once rooted out chiefly on account of the incredible folly of these missionaries, who fermented trouble and embroiled themselves in num-

berless intrigues, which were quite useless and unnecessary as regards the cause of Christianity. It would, in good sooth, have been absurd to hope to have the morality of the people improved by the personal influence of such reckless adventurers.

Japan was ready to be transformed into a solid national state, and at the same time to emerge from a chaotic medieval condition to enter the modern status. The cultural milieu, however, though it might have been ripe for change, must have found it difficult to get transformed by itself, and wanted an infusion of some new element to create an opportunity for the change. A new element did come in, but it proved to be unable to effect any wholesome alteration, so that in order to create that opportunity the only possible and promising way was to resort first to the political unification of the country, and thus to start from the political and so to reach social and individual regeneration. And for that political unification the right man was not long wanting. We find him first in Nobunaga Oda, then in Hideyoshi Toyotomi, and lastly in Iyeyasu Tokugawa.

The first task was naturally to break down the authority of numerous traditions and conventions which had kept the nation in fetters for a long time. This task was an appropriate one for such a hero as Nobunaga, who was imperious and intrepid enough to brave every difficulty coming in his way. He was born in a family which had

been of the following of the house of Shiba, one of the branches of the Ashikaga, and had continued as the hereditary administrator of Owari, a province which formed part of the domain of its suzerain lord. When the power of the house of Shiba decayed, the Oda family asserted its virtual independence in the very province in which it had been the vicegerent of its lord, and it was after this assertion of independence that our hero was born. Strictly speaking, therefore, his right as a territorial lord was founded on an act of usurpation, that is to say, Nobunaga's claim as the owner of the province had no footing in the old system of the Ashikaga, so that he was destined by his birth to become a creator of the new age, and not the upholder of the ancient régime. The province over which he held sway has been called one of the richest provinces in Japan, and was not far from Kyoto, which was, as often stated before, still by far the most influential among the political and cultural centres of the empire. He and his vassals, therefore, had more opportunities than most of the territorial lords and their vassals living in remote provinces, of getting sundry knowledge useful to make his territory greater and stronger. In the year 1560 he defeated and killed his powerful enemy on the east, Yoshimoto Imagawa, the lord of the two provinces, Tôtômi and Suruga. This was his first acquisition of new territory. Four years after, the province of Mino, lying to the north of Owari,

came into his possession. In 1568 he marched his army into Kyoto to avenge the death of the Shogun Yoshiteru, and installed his brother, who was the last of the Ashikaga line, as the new Shogun. Then one territory after another was added to his dominion, so that the Shogun was at last eclipsed in power and influence by Oda, without ever having renounced his hereditary rights. Nobunaga's dominion reached from the Sea of Japan to the Pacific shore, when he met at the height of his career of conquest a premature death by the hand of a traitor.

It is not, however, on account of the magnitude of the territories which he annexed, that Nobunaga figures in the history of Japan, for the land conquered by dint of his arms did not cover more than one-third of the island of Honto. His real historical importance lies not there, but in that he destroyed the old Japan and made himself the harbinger of the new age, though the honour of being creator of modern Japan must be assigned rather to Hideyoshi, his successor. Since the beginning of our history, the Japanese have always been very reluctant, in the cultural respect, to give up what they have possessed from the first, while they have been very eager and keen to take in the new exotic elements which seemed agreeable or useful to them. In other words, the Japanese have been simultaneously conservative and progressive, and immoderately so in both ways. The result of such a conservation and as-

similation operating at the same time was that the country has gradually become a depository of a huge mass of things Japanese and Chinese, no matter whether they were desirable or not. If any exotic matter or custom once found its way into this country, it was preserved with tender care and never-relaxing tenacity, as if it were some treasure found or made at home and would prove a credit to our country. In this way we could save from destruction and demolition a great many historical remains, material as well as spiritual, not only of Japanese but also of Chinese origins. There may still be found in our country many things, the histories of which show that they had once their beginnings in China indeed, but the traces of their origins have long been entirely lost there. Needless to say that the religious rites and other traditions of our forefathers in remotest antiquity have been carefully handed down to us. This assiduity for preserving on the part of the Japanese can best be realised by the existence to this day of very old wooden buildings, some of which, in their dates of erection, go back to more than twelve hundred years ago. Besides this conservative propensity of the nation, the history of our country has also been very favourable to the effort of preserving. We have had no chronic change of dynasties as in China, nor have we experienced any violent revolution, shaking the whole structure of the country, as the French people had. Though our history has not

lacked in civil wars and political convulsions, their destructive force has been comparatively feeble, and one Imperial house has continued to reign here from the mythic Age of the Gods! With this permanent sovereign family as the *point d'appui,* it has been easier in Japan than in any other country to preserve things historic. Things thus preserved, however, have not all been worthy of such care. As we have been obliged to march constantly with hurried steps in our course of civilisation, little time has been left to us to pause and discriminate what was good for preservation from what was not. We have betaken ourselves occasionally to the process of rumination, but it did not render us much assistance. Not only rubbish has not been rejected, as it should have been, but the things which proved of good service at one time and subsequently wore out, have been hoarded over-numerously. Think of this immense quantity of the slag, the detritus, of the civilisations of various countries in various ages all dumped into the limited area of our small empire! No people, however vigorous and progressive they may have been, would have been able to go on briskly with such a heavy burden on their backs. The worst evils were to be recognised in the sphere of religious belief and in the transactions of daily official business. Red tape, home-made and that of China of all dynasties, taken in haphazard and fastened together, formed the guiding-lines of the so-called "admin-

istrative business" in the time of the court-nobles' régime. The prestige of these conventionalities was so powerful that even after the installation of the Shogunate, that is to say, after the establishment of the government which really meant to govern, the administration, promising to be far more effective than that of the Fujiwara's, had to be varnished with this conventionalism. Kiyomori, the first of the warriors to become the political head of the country, failed, because he was ignorant of this red-tapism. The Shogunate iniated by Yoritomo tried at first to keep itself aloof from this influence, but could succeed only for a short duration. The second Shogunate, the Ashikaga, had been overrun almost from its inception by the red tape of the courtiers' régime, as well as by the routine newly started in Kamakura. The humanistic culture, which glimmered during the latter part of this Shogunate, was by its nature able to find its place only where conventionalism did not reign, but it soon began to give way and be conventionalised also. Until this red-tapism was destroyed, there could have been no possibility of the modernisation of Japan.

Superstitions of all sorts, when fixed in their forms and launched on the stream of time to float down to posterity with authority undiminised by age, make the worst kind of convention. We had a great mass of conventions of this type in our country. Various superstitions, from the primitive forms of worship, such as fetichism, totem-

ism, and so forth, to the highest forms of idolatry, survived notwithstanding the introduction of Buddhism. Buddhism, too, has produced various sects which were rather to be called coarse superstitions. Taoism was also introduced together with the general Chinese culture. Not to mention that Shintoism, which was by its original nature hardly to be called a religion, but only a system or body of rites inseparable from the history of our country, became blended with the Buddhist elements and was preached as a religion of a hybrid character. Thus a concourse of different superstitions of all ages had their common field of action in the spirit of the people, so that it has became exceedingly difficult to tell exactly to what kind of faith this or that Japanese belonged; in other words, one was divided against one's self. To put it in the best light, religiously the Japanese were divided into a large number of different religious groups. Religion is generally spoken of in Europe as one of the characteristics of a nation. If it is insufficient to serve as an associating link of a nation, at least the difference in religious belief can draw a line of marked distinction between different nations, and thus the embracing of the same religion becomes indirectly a strong uniting force in a nation. Such a co-existence of heterogeneous forms of religious beliefs painted the confessional map of Japan in too many variegated colours, a condition which was directly opposed to the process of national unification, of

which our country had been placed in urgent need for a very long time. In short, it was hard for us to expect from the religious side anything helpful in our national affairs.

Moreover, the religious spirit of the nation reached its climax in this later Ashikaga period. Except in the age of the introduction of Buddhism and the beginning of the Kamakura era, enthusiasm for salvation has never, in all the course of Japanese history, been stronger than in this period. We witness now several religious corporations, the most remarkable of which were those formed by two violent and influential sects of Japanese Buddhism, Jôdo-shinshû or Ikkô-shû and Nichiren-shû or Hokke-shû. The followers of the latter, though said to be the most aggressive sectarians in our country, were not so numerous as the former, and were put under control by Nobunaga with no great difficulty. The former, however, was by far the mightier, constituting an exclusive society by itself, and its adherents spread especially over the provinces of central Japan, that is to say, wherever the arms of Nobunaga were triumphant. It presented therefore a great hindrance to the uniform administration of his domains.

Other Buddhist bodies, which had been not less formidable, not because their creed had numerous fervent adherents, but because they had an invisible historical prestige originating in very old times, were the monks of the temples and monas-

teries on Mount Hiyei, belonging to the Tendai sect, and of those clustered on Mount Kôya, of the Shingon sect. These two sects had long ceased active propaganda, but the temples had been revered by the Imperial house, and none had ever dared to put a check upon the arrogance of the priests and monks residing in them. As they had received rich donations in land from the court and from devotees, they had been able to live a luxurious life, and very few of them gave themselves up to religious works. Most of them behaved as if they were soldiers by profession, and were always ready to fight, not only in defence of the interests of the corporations to which they belonged, but also as auxiliaries of neighbouring territorial lords, when their aid was called for. Such had been the practice since the end of Fujiwara régime. The more their soldierly character predominated, the more their religious colouring decreased, and in the period of which I am speaking now, they were rather territorial powers than religious bodies. If we seek for their counterpart in the history of Europe, the republic founded by order of the Teutonic Knights in Prussia would fairly correspond to them, rather than ordinary bishoprics or archbishoprics. For the unification, therefore, they were also obstacles which could not be suffered to remain as they had been.

In order to achieve the national unification and to effect the modernisation of the country, it was necessary to dispense with all the red tape, the

time-honoured superstitions and all other encumbrances lying in the way. It was not, however, an easy task to do away with all these things, for they had been held sacrosanct, so that to set them at defiance was but to brave the public opinion of the time. And none had been courageous enough to raise his hand against them, until Nobunaga decided to rid himself of all these feeble but tenacious shackles.

In the year 1571 Nobunaga attacked Mount Hiyei, for the turbulent shavelings of the mountain had sided with his enemies in the war of the preceding year, and burned down the Temple Yenryakuji to the ground. The emblem of the glory of Buddhism in Japan, which had stood for more than seven centuries, was thus turned to ashes. The next blow was struck at the recalcitrant priests of the temple of Negoro, belonging to the same sect as Kôya and situated near it. As for the Ikkô-sectarians with the Hongwanji as centre, the arms of Nobunaga were not so successful against them as against the other two temples, so that in the end he was compelled to conclude an armistice with them, but he was able in great measure to curtail their overbearing power. Of all these feats of arms, the burning of the temples on Mount Hiyei most dumbfounded Nobunaga's contemporaries, for the hallowed institution, held in the highest esteem rivalling even the prestige of the Imperial family, was thus prostrated in the dust, unable to rise up again

to its former grandeur. It is much lamented by later historians that in the conflagration of the temple an immense number of invaluable documents, chronicles and other kinds of historical records was swept away forever, and they calumniated our hero on this account rather severely. It is true that if those materials had existed to this day, the history of our country would have been much more lucid and easy to comprehend than it is now, and if Nobunaga could have saved those papers first, and then burnt the temple, he would have acted far more wisely than he did, and have earned less censure from posterity. But history is not made for the sake of historians, and we need not much lament about losses which there was little possibility of avoiding. A nation ought to feel more grateful to a great man for giving her a promising future, than for preserving merely some souvenirs of the past. The bell announcing the dawn of modern Japan was rung by nobody but Nobunaga himself by this demolition of a decrepit institution.

It was not only those proud priests that defied Nobunaga and thereby suffered a heavy calamity, but the flourishing city of Sakai met the same fate. As the city had been accustomed to despise the military force of the condottieri, who abounded in the provinces neighbouring Kyoto and were easily to be bribed by money to change sides, it misunderstood the new rising power of Nobunaga, and dared to defy him. The insolence of

the citizens of this wealthy town irritated Nobunaga and was punished by him severely. The defence works of the city were razed to the ground, and the city was placed under the control of a mayor appointed by him. The only city in Japan which promised to grow an autonomous political body thus succumbed to the new unifying force.

Nobunaga was born, however, not to be a mere insensate destroyer of ancient Japan. He seems also to have been gifted with the ability of reconstruction, an ability which was not meagre in him at all. That his special attention was directed to the improvement of the means of communication shows that he considered the work of organisation and consolidation to be as important as gaining a victory. The countenance which he gave to the Christian missionaries might have been the result of his repugnance at the degradation or intractability of the Buddhists in Japan. Could it not be imagined, however, that he was prone, in religious affairs as well as in other things, to seek the yet untried means thoroughly to renovate Japan? It is much to be regretted that he did not live long enough to see his aims attained. When he died, his destructive task had not reached its end, and his constructive work had barely begun. It was he, however, who indicated that Japan was a country which could be truly unified, and that what had come to be preserved and revered blindly should not all necessarily be

so; and the grand task of building up the new Japan, initiated by him, was transferred to his successor, Hideyoshi.

It was in 1582 that Nobunaga died in Kyoto, and in the quarrel which ensued after his death among his Diadochi, Hideyoshi remained as the final successor. The year after, Ôsaka was chosen as the place of his residence. He was of very low origin, so that he had even less footing in the conventional old régime than his master Nobunaga, and therefore was more fitted to become the creator of the new Japan. He continued the course of conquest begun by Nobunaga, and annexed the whole of historic Japan within eight years from his accession to the political power. The most noteworthy item in his internal administration was the land survey which he ordered to be undertaken parallel to the progress of his arms. The great estates of Japan were one after another subjected to a uniform measurement, and thus was fashioned the standard of new taxation. This land-survey began in 1590 and continued till the death of Hideyoshi. The proportion of the tax levied to the area of the taxable land must still have varied in different localities, but the mode of taxation was now simplified thereby to a great extent, for the old systems, each of which was peculiar to an individual estate, were henceforth mostly abrogated. The manorial system of old Japan was entirely swept away.

The unity of the nation under Hideyoshi, that

is to say, Japan at the disposal of a single person, an illuminated despot, might have been really the result of the long process of unification gradually accentuated, but it may also be considered as one of the causes which brought about a still stronger national consciousness. The expulsion of the foreign missionaries and the prohibition of the Christian propaganda did not constitute a religious persecution in its strict sense. That Hideyoshi was no enthusiastic Buddhist should be accepted as a negative proof of it. Most probably he had no religious aversion against Christianity, but the intermeddling of those missionaries in the politics of our country infuriated him, for the demand for the solid unfication of the nation, embodied in him, was against such an encroachment. The persecution, which crowned many adventurers with the honour of martyrdom, is to be imputed to the lack of prudence on the part of those missionaries.

As to the motive of the Korean invasion undertaken by Hideyoshi, various interpretations have been put forth by various historians. Some explain it as mere love of adventure and fame. Others attribute it to the necessity of keeping malcontent warriors engaged abroad, in order to keep the country pacific. As Hideyoshi himself died while the expedition was still in progress, giving neither explanation nor hint of his real motive, it is very difficult for us to fathom his innermost thought. It would not be altogether a mistaken idea, however, if we consider it as an outcome of

his unifying aspiration carried a few steps farther outside the empire.

When we consider his brilliant career from its beginning, the amount of work which he accomplished greatly exceeded what we could expect from a single ordinary mortal. He performed his share of the construction of new Japan admirably. As to the organisation of what Hideyoshi had roughly put together, it was reserved for the prudent intelligence of Iyeyasu to accomplish.

CHAPTER XI

THE TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE,—ITS POLITICAL RÉGIME

THE spirit of the coming age was loudly heralded by Nobunaga. Most of the hindrances which had persistently obstructed the national progress for a long while were cleared away at his peremptory call. Then out of the quarry opened by him the stones for the new pieces of sculpture were hewn out by his successor Hideyoshi. The blocks, however, which were only roughcut by the latter, were left unfinished, awaiting the final touch of wise and prudent Iyeyasu. The Shogunate which he set up at Yedo, now Tokyo, in the province of Musashi, continued for more than two centuries and a half. Not only was it the longest in duration among our Shogunates, but it exceeded most of the European dynasties in the number of years which it covered, being a little longer than the reign of the Bourbons in France, including that of the branch of Orleans and of the Restoration. During this long régime of the single house of the Tokugawa, Japan had been able to prepare herself slowly to attain the

stage on which all the world witnesses her now standing.

The history of Japan under this Shogunate shows that throughout the whole epoch our country had not yet been entirely stripped of her medieval garments, but it is absurd at the same time to designate the period as essentially not modern. For long years we have been on our forward march, always dragging along with us the ever-accumulating residue of the civilisation of the past. If any one, however, should venture to judge us by the enormous heaps of these souvenirs of a by-gone civilisation overburdening us, and should say that the Japanese had been standing still these two centuries and a half, then he would be entirely mistaken. The overestimation of Japan of the Meidji era by a great many foreigners is, though seconded by not a few Japanese, a fault which had its origin in this misapprehension about our country under the Tokugawa régime. The attention of these observers was engrossed, when they took their first views of the land and people, by those things which seemed to them strange and curious, being quite different from what they themselves possessed at home, or which were thought by them anachronistic, on account of having been abandoned by them long ago, though once they had them also in their own countries. As regards what they had been accustomed to at home, they took very little notice of it in Japan, and considered the existence of such things in our

country as a matter of course, if they happened to come across them. Most of them came over to Japan, prepossessed already by their expectations of finding here a unique country, and were thus unconsciously led, after their view of the country itself, to depict it in a very quaint light, as something entirely different from anything they had ever experienced anywhere; an error which even the most studious and acute observer, such as Engelhardt Kaempfer, was not able to escape. No need to mention the rest, especially those missionaries who wished to extol their own merits at the expense of the Japanese. We are still suffering from misconceptions about our country on the part of Europeans,—misconceptions which are the legacy of the misrepresentation of Japan by those early observers. By no means, however, do I presume to try to exhibit Japan only in her brightest colours. Far from it, and what I ask foreign readers not to forget is that the history of Japan under the Tokugawa Shogunate, the period which was essentially modern, should not be superficially judged by its abundance of feudal trammels fondly described by contemporary Europeans. In this chapter, I shall first make manifest which were the things medieval retained in the time of the Tokugawa, and then treat about the essential character of the age which should be called all but modern.

In the foregoing chapter I spoke about some resemblances between our later Ashikaga period

and the Italian renaissance of the Quattrocento. In the successive phases which followed in the East and in the West, there might be found some other similarities. History, however, has not been ordained to run in streams exactly parallel to one another in all countries, and to be a counterpart of the age of the Reformation, the epochs of the Oda and the Toyotomi are not more appropriate than the age of the Kamakura Shogunate. A style in Japanese art, prevalent during and after the régime of Hideyoshi and called "the Momoyama" by recent connoisseurs had a striking resemblance to the Empire style, which followed the Rococo in Europe, and in some respects indeed the later Ashikaga period of our history might be likened to Europe of the eighteenth century, without gross inappropriateness, while at other points it might be compared to the Renaissance with equal fairness. It would be very stupid, however, to surmise that Japan in the Tokugawa period attained to a culture which in its general aspect belonged almost to the same stage as that prevailing in Europe in the early nineteenth century. Art, though an important cultural factor, cannot be made the sole criterion of the civilisation of any nation or people. It is quite indisputable that Japan under the Tokugawa Shogunate had many things about which we could not boast.

So long as war is a calamity unavoidable in this world, it is folly to expect in any country that the

cruelty of men to men will entirely cease. But if the intensity of cruelty in warfare be taken as being in inverse ratio to the progress of civilisation, as it generally used to be, then the Tokugawa period evidently should not be lauded as an age of great enlightenment. Until the end of the Shogunate of this house it had been the custom for a warrior on the battlefield to cut off the head of the antagonist whom he had slain. Though we have had no such demoralising sort of warfare in our history as that carried on by mercenary troops in medieval Europe, where defeated warriors were taken prisoners in order to obtain from them as rich ransoms as they could afford to pay, in other words, though the nature of warfare in Japan was far more serious in general than in the West, it was on that account far more dangerous for the combattants engaged. It was the custom in any battle to reward that warrior who first decapitated an enemy's head as generously as one who was the first over the wall in an attack on a fortress. Moreover, during the ceremony in celebration of a victory on a battlefield, all those enemy heads were collected and brought for the inspection of the commanding general of the victorious army. Such a custom in warfare, however efficient it might have been in stimulating the martial courage of warriors, cannot be regarded as praiseworthy in any civilised country, even where war is considered as the highest occupation of the people.

The Japanese manner of suicide called *harakiri* or *seppuku*, a custom of world-wide celebrity, is another thing which is well to be commented on here. If any foreigner should suppose that *seppuku* has been very frequently committed in the same manner as we see it practised on the stage, he would be greatly misled in appreciating the true national character of the Japanese. On the contrary, *seppuku* has not been a matter of every-day occurrence, having taken place far less frequently than one hears now-a-days about railway accidents. Moreover, when it was performed, it was carried out in decent ways, if we may use the word decent here, and not in the grotesque mode displayed on the Japanese stage, accompanied by sardonic laughter, with bowels exposed after cutting the belly crosswise. The reason why the Japanese warrior resorted to *seppuku* in committing suicide was not to kill himself in a methodically cruel manner, but to die an honourable and manly death by his own hand. For such methods of committing suicide, as taking poison, drowning, strangling oneself, and the like, were considered very ignoble, and especially unworthy of warriors. Even to die by merely cutting one's throat was held to be rather effeminate. The fear of the protraction of the death agony was looked on as a token of cowardice, and therefore to be able to kill one's self in the most sober and circumstantial manner, and at the same time to do it with every consideration of others, was thought to be one of

the requisite qualifications of a brave warrior in an emergency. In short, for a suicide to be honourable, it had to be proved that it was not the result of insanity. Thus we can see that not the spirit of cruelty but martial honour was the motive of committing *seppuku,* and it would be unfair to stigmatise the Japanese as a cruel people because of the practice. Still I am far from wishing to vindicate this custom in all its aspects. The fact that this method of killing one's self continued during the whole of the Tokugawa régime as a penalty, without loss of honour, for capital crimes of the *samurai* show that the humane culture of the age left much to be wished for.

Class distinction was another dark spot on the culture of the age. All sorts of people outside the fighting class were roughly classified into three bodies, that is to say, peasants, artisans, and merchants, and were held in utter subjection, as classes made simply to be governed. But the often-quoted tradition that warriors of that time had as their privilege the right to kill any of the commonalty at their sweet will and pleasure, without the risk of incurring the slightest punishment thereby, is erroneous, having no foundation in real historical fact. Those warriors who had committed a homicide were without prejudice called upon to justify their act before the proper authority. If they failed to prove that they were the provoked and injured party, they were sure to have severe penalties inflicted on them. On the

whole, however, the common people in the Tokugawa age were looked down upon by warriors as inferiors in reasoning and understanding, and therefore as disqualified to participate in public affairs, social as well as political. That their intellectual defects must have been due to their neglected education was a matter clean put out of mind. As regards the respective professions of the above-mentioned three classes of plebeians, agriculture was thought to be the most honourable, on account of producing the staple food-material, so that warriors, especially of the lower classes, did not disdain to engage in tilling the lands alotted to them or in exploring new arable lands. The peasants themselves, however, were not so greatly esteemed on account of their engaging in a profession which was held honourable. Handicrafts in general and artisans employed in them had not been held particularly respectable by themselves, but as the profession was productive, it was recognised as indispensable, despised by no means. Moreover, many artistic geniuses, who had come out of the innumerable multitudes of artisans of various trades, have been held in very high regard in our country, where the people have the reputation of being one of the most artistic in the world; and those articles of rare talent unwittingly raised the esteem of the crafts in which they were engaged. That which was most despised as a profession was the business of merchants in all lines, for to gain by buying and selling was thought

from times past to be a transaction approaching almost to chicanery, and therefore by no means to be encouraged from the standpoint of national and martial morals. Pedlars and small shopkeepers were therefore simply held in contempt. Great merchants, however, though not much esteemed on account of their profession, were generally treated with due consideration in virtue of their amassed wealth. Only too frequently had the Shogunate, as well as various *daimyo,* been obliged to stoop to court the goodwill of rich merchants in order to get money from them.

The methods of taxation were very arbitrary, and the person and the rights of property of individuals were not very highly respected at that time, the common people under the Shogunate being often subjected to hard and brutal treatment, their persons maltreated and injured and their properties confiscated on various trifling pretences. Though the way to petition was not absolutely debarred to them, it was made very irksome and perilous for plebeians to sue and obtain a hearing for their manifold complaints. On the other hand, as they were not recognised as a part of the nation to be necessarily consulted, and as the *vox populi* was not heeded in the management of public affairs, their education was not regarded as an indispensable duty of the government. No serious endeavour had ever been made to improve the common people intellectually, nor to raise their standard of living. If a number of them showed

themselves able to behave like gentle folk, as if they had been warriors by birth and, therefore, well-educated, they were rewarded as men of extraordinary merits such as could not be reasonably expected of them.

The status of the political organisation of the country during the Tokugawa régime was also what ought to be called medieval, if we draw our conclusions from the materials ranged on the darker side only. The country had been divided into parcels, large and small, numbering in all a little less than three hundred, each with a territorial lord or a *daimyo* as its quasi-independent autocratic ruler. The frontier line dividing adjacent territories belonging to different *daimyo* used to be guarded very vigilantly on both sides, and passage, both in and out, was minutely scrutinised. For that purpose numerous barrier-gates were set up along and within the boundary. Any land bounded by such frontiers, and conferred on a *daimyo* by the Shogunate as his hereditary possession, was by its nature a self-constituted state, the political system prevailing within which having been modelled after that of the Shogunate itself. At the same time the territory of a *daimyo* was economically a self-providing, self-sufficient body. To become in such wise independent at least was the ideal of the *daimyo* possessing the territory or of the territorial statesmen under him. In other words, the territory of a *daimyo* was an entity, political and economical. In each territory

certain kinds of produce from those confines had been strictly prohibited by regulation to be exported beyond the frontier, for fear that there might sometimes occur a scarcity of those commodities for the use of the inhabitants of the territory, or lest other territories should imitate the cultivation of like kinds of produce, so that the value of their own commodities might decrease thereby. In case of a famine, that is to say, of the failure of rice crops in a territory, a phenomenon which has by no means been of rare occurrence in our country, the export of cereals used to be forbidden in most of the neighboring territories, even when they had a "bumper crop." Such an internal embargo testifies that not only had Japan been closed against foreigners, but within herself each territory cared only for its own welfare, adhering to a mercantilist principle, as if it stood quite secluded from the rest of the country. Very little of the cohesion necessary to an integral state could be perceived in Japan of that time.

Such was the condition of Japan under the Tokugawa Shogunate presented to the eyes of, and easily noticed by, the foreign observers, who visited our country at the beginning and the middle of the period. Nay, many of the foreigners who wrote about our land and people seem to have shared nearly the same views as above. In truth, however, many important factors of the Japanese history of this epoch have been omitted

by them, and the idea they could form of Japan from the one-sided and scanty material at their disposal was only a very incomplete image of modern Japanese civilisation. I shall, therefore, try to give a general survey of the political and social condition of our country from the beginning of the seventeenth century down to the Revolution of the Meidji, and then shall treat in brief about the civilisation of the age.

The Shogunate of the house of the Tokugawa was not an entirely new invention. It was a partial recognition of the old régime which Iyeyasu had inherited from Hideyoshi, as far as the territorial lords were concerned, who were installed or recognised anterior to the advent of Iyeyasu to power. Though a great many of the former feudatories, especially those who had been faithful to the House of the Toyotomi to the last, had been killed or deprived of their possessions after the decisive battle of Sekigahara, not a few of them survived, counting among them the most powerful of the *daimyo,* the House of Mayeta, who was the master of Kaga and two other provinces on the Sea of Japan. The lords of this kind had formerly been the equals of the Tokugawa, when the latter was standing under the protection of Hideyoshi, and it was difficult for the new Shogunate, in a country where the Emperor has ever been the paramount sovereign, to make those lords formally swear the oath of fealty to itself. The nature of the sovereignty,

therefore, of the Tokugawa over the feudatories aforesaid was only that of *primus inter pares.* The *daimyo* who stood in this relation to the Shogunate were called *tozama.*

The rest of the *daimyo,* together with the body-guard of the Shogun, the so-called "eighty thousand" with their habitual residence at Yedo, made up the hereditary retainers or *fudai.* The non-domestic *daimyo* had nothing to do with the Shogun's central government, all the posts of which, from such high functionaries as the *rôchû* or elders, who were none other than the cabinet ministers of the Shogunate, down to such petty officials as scribes and watchmen, had been all filled with domestics of various grades. As far as these domestics or direct retainers of the Shogunate were concerned, the military régime of the Tokugawa can be held to have been a revived form of that of Kamakura. In the former, however, the disparity in power and wealth between the upper and the lower domestics of the Shogun was far more remarkable than it had been among the retainers of the latter, that is to say, the *djito.* The term "go-kenin," held to be honourable in the time of Kamakura, became, in the Tokugawa period, a designation of the lowest order of the direct vassals of the Shogun. A certain number belonging to the upper class of the *fudai* or domestics of the Tokugawa Shogunate were made *daimyo,* and placed on the same footing as feudatories of historical lineage, the former equals of

the Tokugawa, and formed with them henceforth the highest military nobility of the country. The remainder of the domestics, who were not raised to the rank of *daimyo,* were comprised under the name of *hatamoto,* which means "under the standard," that is to say, the Body-guard of the Shogun. Among the members of this body there were indeed numerous scales of gradation. The lowest of them had to lead a very miserable and straitened life in some obscure corners of the city of Yedo, while the best of them stood as regards income very near to minor *daimyo,* and were often more influential. Their political status, however, notwithstanding manifold differences in rank among them, was all the same, all being equally, direct vassals of the Shogunate, and having no regular warriors or *samurai* as their own vassals. They, therefore, belonged to the lowest grade of the privileged classes in the military hierarchy, and in this respect there was no cardinal difference between them and the common *samurai* who were vassals of ordinary *daimyo.* That they were, however, the immediate subjects of the Shogun, and that they did not owe fealty to any *daimyo,* who was in reality subordinate at least to the Shogun, if not his vassal in name, placed them in a status like that of the knights immediate of the Holy Roman Empire or of the mediatised princes of recent Germany; in short, above the status of ordinary *samurai* attached to an ordinary *daimyo.* Strictly speaking, between these two

there interposed another group of *samurai*. They were the vassals of the three *daimyo* of extraordinary distinction, of Nagoya in the province of Owari, of Wakayama in the province of Kii, and of Mito in the province of Hitachi. All these three being of the lateral branches of the Tokugawa, were held in specially high regard, and put at the topmost of all the other *daimyo*, so that their vassals considered themselves to be quasi-*hatamoto* and therefore above the "common" or "garden" *samurai*.

The *daimyo* acted as virtual potentates in territories granted to them, and held a court and a government there, both modelled largely after the household and the government of the Shogun at Yedo. The better part of the *daimyo* resided in castles built imposingly after the architectural style of the fortresses in Europe at that time, the technic having perhaps been introduced along with Christianity, and they led a life far more easy and elegant, though more regular, than the *shugo* of the Ashikaga age. It has been ascribed, by the way, to the rare sagacity of Iyeyasu as a politician, that the territories of the two kinds of *daimyo*, *tozama* and *fudai*, were so adroitly juxtaposed, that the latter were able to keep watch over the former's attitude toward the Shogunate.

The *daimyo* were ranked according to the officially estimated amount of rice to be produced in the territory of each. In the time of Kamakura,

the renumeration of the *djito* was counted by the area of ricefields in the manor entrusted to his care. By and by, the land which was the source of the renumeration for a *djito* came to be partitioned among his numerous descendants, and some of the portions allotted became so small, that it was but ridiculous to think of exercising the jurisdiction of military police over them. Area of land began to cease thus to be the standard of valuation of the income of a *djito,* when the office of *djito* meant only the emolument accompanying it, and no longer carried with it the responsibility incumbent on it at its first establishment. The ultimate result of such a change was that the quantity or the price of rice produced began to be adopted gradually as the standard of valuation of the income of territorial lords, and for a while the two standards were in use together till the end of the Ashikaga age. Moreover, infrequently part of the income of a *shugo* was reckoned by the quantity of rice, while another part of the income of the same *shugo* was assessed by the sale-price of the rice cultivated. This promiscuous way of valuation, however, caused great irregularity and confusion. For, added to the disagreement about the real quantity of rice produced and the amount registered to be produced, the price of the cereal itself had been so ceaselessly fluctuating according to the inconstant condition of crops, that there was no such thing as a regular standard price of rice

invariably applicable to any year and to any locality. Nevertheless, in an age when no uniform system of currency was established and to accept any coin at its face value was an impossible matter, in other words, when it was difficult to represent the price of rice in any sort of coin then in use, to make a standard of value, not of the actual amount of rice but of its unceasingly vacillating price, could not but cause a great deal of inconvenience and confusion. We can easily see from the above that the quantity of rice was by far the surer means of bargaining than the money, which was not only indeterminate in value but insufficient to boot. Hideyoshi, therefore, put a stop to the use of the method of indicating the income of a territorial lord by its valuation in money, and decreed that henceforth only the yearly estimated yield of rice, counted by the *koku* as a unit, should be adopted as the means of denoting the revenue of a territory, a *koku* roughly corresponding to five bushels in English measure. The land-survey, which he undertook on a grand scale throughout the whole empire, had as its main purpose to measure the area of land classed as rice-fields in the territories of the *daimyo,* according to the units newly decreed, and to make the estimate of the amount of rice said to be produced commensurate as nearly as possible with the average crop realisable. Withal, the inequality of the standard of estimate in different localities was rectified by this assessment of Hideyoshi's.

This method of estimating the income of a *daimyo* had come into general use since the beginning of the Tokugawa Shogunate. As there was then no system in our country of gradating the *daimyo* by titles, such as dukes, counts, and so forth, the estimated annual yield of rice in *koku* was used as the sole means of determining the rank of the lords of the various territories in the long queue of the Tokugawa *daimyo,* with the exception of a very few who had been placed in a comparatively high rank on account of their specially noble lineage or the unique position of their families in the national history, though most of the nobles belonging to the latter class were classed as an intervening group. The minimum number of *koku* assigned to a *daimyo* was ten thousand. As regards the maximum number of *koku,* there was no legal limit. One who stood, however, highest in order was the above-mentioned House of Mayeta, the lord of Kaga etc., whose domain was assessed at more than a million *koku.* About three hundred *daimyo,* who were ranged between the two extremes, were divided into three orders. All those worth more than two hundred thousand *koku* formed a class of the *daimyo* major, and those worth less than one hundred thousand were comprised in a group of the *daimyo* minor, while the rest, that is to say, those between one and two hundred thousand formed the middle corps.

In the Shogun's court, a seat was assigned to

each *daimyo* in a specified room, according to the class to which he belonged. One could, therefore, easily tell the rank of a *daimyo* by the name of the room in which he had to wait when he attended on the Shogun. All *daimyo,* almost without exception, had to move in and out at fixed intervals between his terrtory, where his castle or camp stood, and Yedo, where he kept, or, to say more correctly, was granted by the Shogun, residences, generally more than two in number. The interval allowed to a *daimyo* for remaining in his territory varied according to the distance of that territory from Yedo, being the shorter and oftener for the nearer. He was obliged to leave his wife and children constantly in one of his residences at Yedo, as hostages for his fidelity to the Shogun. As to the vassals or *samurai* of a *daimyo,* there were also two sorts. By far the greater part of the *samurai* belonging to a *daimyo* had their dwellings in their master's territory, generally in the vicinity of his castle. These *samurai* were the main support of their lord, and had to accompany him by turns in his official tour to Yedo and back. The rest of the *samurai* under the same lord, a band which formed the small minority, lived constantly in Yedo, each family in a compartment of the accessory buildings surrounding the lord's residence like a colony. These were as a rule men who were enlisted into the service of a *daimyo* more for the sake of making a gallant show at his official and social functions

at Yedo, than for the sake of strengthening his fighting forces. It was natural that men accustomed to the polished life of the military capital were thought better qualified to fulfil such functions than the rustic *samurai* fresh from his territories who were good only for fighting and other serious kinds of business. While a *daimyo* was absent in his territory, a *samurai* of his, belonging to this metropolitan group, was entrusted with the care of his residences and their occupants in Yedo, and also with the duty of receiving orders from the Shogunate or of transacting inter-territorial business with representatives of other *daimyo* at Yedo. The meetings held by these representatives of the *daimyo* were said to be one of the most fashionable gatherings in Yedo. That the doyen of such functionaries had a certain prestige over others, was very similar to the usage among the diplomatic corps in Europe.

The *samurai* who had their abode in their lord's territory, however, represented the real strength of a *daimyo,* and were the soul and body of the whole military régime. The number of *samurai* in a territory differed according to the rank and the resources of a *daimyo.* Some of the powerful nobles counted more than ten thousand regular *samurai* under them, while minor ones could maintain only a few hundred as necessary retainers. In the latter case almost all of the *samurai* had their dwellings clustering around the castle or camp of their lord. If there were

any *samurai* who lived outside of the residential town, they led an agricultural rather than a soldierly life. The relation of vassalage in such a territory was simple, for under the *samurai* consisting of a single order there was no swords-wearer serving them. In the territory of the powerful *daimyo,* however, especially in those of the big *daimyo* in Kyushu and the northern part of Honto, comprising an area of two or more average provinces in Middle Japan, the relation of vassalage was very complicated, sometimes forming a feudalism of the second order. That is to say, the most influential *samurai* under those *daimyo* had also their own small territory granted by their lord, just as the latter had his granted or recognised by the Shogunate, and held several hundred swords-wearers, non-commissioned *samurai,* in their service. It was not rare that some of these magnates surpassed in income many minor independent *daimyo,* and had in their hands the destiny of a greater number of people, for their emolument rose often to twenty or thirty thousand *koku.* Their rank in the military régime, however, was indisputably lower than that of the smallest of *daimyo,* on account of their being only indirectly subordinate to the Shogun.

In all territories throughout the whole country, the emolument of the *samurai* was granted in the form of land, or of rice from the granaries of the *daimyo,* or paid in cash. Sometimes we see a combination of two or three of these forms

given to one *samurai*. Besides this pay a patch of ground was allotted to each *samurai* as his homestead, and a part of that ground used to be cultivated to produce vegetables for family consumption. In whatever form a *samurai* might receive his stipend, it was officially denoted by the number of *koku*, registered as his nominal income, and that very number determined his position in the list of vassals of a *daimyo*, unless he came from an extraordinarily distinguished lineage. As regards the maximum and the minimum number of *koku* given to *samurai*, there was no uniform standard applicable to all of the territories. Such powerful *daimyo* as Mayeta in Kaga, Shimatsu in Satsuma, and Date in Mutsu owned many vassal-*samurai* who were so puissant as to be fairly comparable to small *daimyo*, while in the territories of the latter, a *samurai* of pretty high position in his small territorial circle received an allowance of *koku* so scant that one of the lowest rank, if he were a regular *samurai*, would disdain to receive in big territories. Generally speaking, however, one hundred *koku* was considered to be an average standard, applicable to *samurai* under any *daimyo*, to distinguish those of the respectable or official class from those of the non-commissioned or subaltern class. Only the *samurai* above this standard could keep servants bearing two swords, long and short, as a *samurai* himself did. Not only all officers in time of war, but all high civil functionaries in the ter-

ritorial government of a *daimyo* were taken from this body of orthodox *samurai*. The *samurai* below this level could keep a servant wearing only one sword, the shorter, and they had to serve their lord as officials of the inferior class, such as scribes, cashiers, butlers, etc.

The lowest in the scale of the military régime was the group of *ashigaru*, that is to say, of the light infantry. Those who belonged to this group, though wearers of two swords, were not counted as of the corps of *samurai*. Being legally vassals of a *daimyo*, they had yet very rare chances of serving him directly, and often they enlisted into the household service of a higher *samurai*. Between the *ashigaru* and the regular *samurai*, there was another intermediate group of two-sworded men, called *kachi*, which means warriors-on-foot. In feudal times all warriors, if of *samurai* rank, were presumed to be cavaliers, though in reality most of them had not even a stable, and skill in horsemanship was not rigorously required from the *samurai* of the lower class. The name *kachi*, given to those who in rank came next to the *samurai*, implied that this intermediate group of quasi-*samurai* was not allowed to ride on horse-back. This group was, however, much nearer to the *samurai* than to the *ashigaru* group.

So far I have given a rough sketch of the gradations in the military régime in the territory of a *daimyo*. It should be here noticed that, besides the classes above stated, there were many other

minor groups below the regular *samurai,* and that there were also diverse heterogeneities of system in the territories of different *daimyo.* Needless to say that the gradations and kinds of *hatamoto,* who were *samurai* serving directly under the Shogun, were far more multifarious and complex than those of the *samurai* under a *daimyo.* There is no doubt, however, that the apex of the whole military régime was the Shogun himself, while at its foundation were the sundry *samurai* who numbered perhaps nearly half a million families in all.

All the lands of Japan were not allotted exhaustively to the *daimyo* by the Shogunate. On the contrary, immense territories in various parts of the empire, amounting to four millions of *koku,* was reserved to the Shogun himself. Important sea-ports, such as Nagasaki, Sakai, and Niigata, rich mines like those in the province of Iwami and in the island of Sado, the vast forest of Kiso in the province of Shinano, and so forth, were kept in the hands of the Shogunate, out of economical as well as political reasons. With the income from all these agricultural and industrial resources, the Shogunate defrayed all the governmental charges and the expenses of national defence, as well as the enormous civil list of the Shogun himself, who maintained a very luxurious court. The stipend for the lower class of *hatamoto,* who had no land allotted to them, was paid also with the rice raised in the Shogun's domain

or bought with his money and stored in Yedo. As to the fiscal system and the direct domain of a *daimyo* in his territory, it is needless to say that everywhere the imitation of that of the Shogun prevailed, conducted only on a smaller scale.

The relation of the Shogunate to the Emperor at Kyoto was on the whole but a continuation of the same status as in the time of Hideyoshi. Since the Fujiwara period state affairs had ceased to be conducted personally by the Emperor himself. The regent, who was at first, and ought to have been ever after, appointed during the minority or the illness of an Emperor, became identical with the highest ministerial post, and lost its extraordinary character. It is true that some of the able emperors, dissatisfied with such a state of things, tried to take the reins of government into their own hands again, and some succeeded for a while in the recovery of their political power, so far as their relations with the Fujiwara family were concerned. What they could recover, however, was not all of the prestige which had slipped out of the hands of their predecessors. For on account of the lassitude of the Fujiwara court-nobles, the power which they had once arrogated to themselves passed into the possession of the newly arisen warrior class, and what those emperors could recover was only a part of what still remained in the hands of the Fujiwara. The Emperor Go-Daigo was the last who tried desperately to resume the imperial prerogative once

wrested from the Kamakura Shogunate, and he succeeded in his endeavour. He could not, however, prevent the advent to power of the new Shogunate of the Ashikaga. After that, through the most turbulent age in the history of Japan, which continued to the time of Hideyoshi, the imperial household could sustain itself only meagrely on the scanty income from a few estates. But however lacking in power and material resource the Emperor might have been, he still continued to be the source and fountain of honour as ever, and everybody clearly knew that he was, being held divine, indisputably higher than the Shogun, who was obliged to obey if the Emperor chose to command. What was to be regretted was that no Emperor had been strong enough to command. The saying "le roi régne, mais il ne gouverne pas" has never been accepted in our country as the constitutional principle. That the imperial prestige was never totally lost even in the depths of the turmoil of war may be proved by the fact that the Emperor often interceded in struggles between various *daimyo,* who waged weary and acrimonious wars against one another. The political situation of the Emperor, however, had been unsettled for a long while, only because the situation had remained for long not urgent enough to require to be made instantly clear. If it had had to be solved at once, without doubt it must have been solved in favour of the Emperor. Especially after the civil war of the Ohnin era,

to restore the nominal power, of which the Shogun of the Ashikaga family was in possession, would have added nothing substantial to the real power of the then Emperor, for the Shogunate of that time was but a scapegoat in the hands of impudent and adventurous warriors. Even the prestige of the Emperor and the Shogun combined would not have sufficed to achieve anything momentous at that period, when the country had been so torn asunder as not to be easily united and pacified. What was most needed in Japan of that time was a fresh, strong, energetic military dictator.

Nobunaga, who came soon after the Ashikaga, was endued, at the height of his power, with a civil title belonging to the régime of court-nobles, and had not, until his untimely death, been invested by the Emperor with the Shogunate. Having sprung from a warrior family which had been originally subservient to one of the retainers of the Shogunate, he would perhaps have been loth himself to be looked on as an usurper even after he had ceased to assist the Shogun, who survived him. Moreover, during his whole life, it was impossible for him to become the virtual master of the whole of Japan. It was Hideyoshi, his vassal and successor, who succeeded at last in the unification of long-disturbed Japan by dint of arms. He, however, was also not invested with the Shogunate. It is said that he would have liked, indeed, to become one, but was dissuaded from it, having

been reminded that he did not belong to either the Minamoto or the Taira, the two renowned warrior-families which were historically thought to be the only ones qualified to provide the generalissimo, the Shogun. After his death and the subsequent defeat of the partisans of his family in the decisive battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Iyeyasu Tokugawa, who gave himself out as the descendant of Minamoto-no-Yoshiiye, succeeded to the power as Shogun in 1603. With this political change the Emperor had really very little to do, except to give recognition to the *fait accompli*. The selection of Yedo by Iyeyasu as the site of the new Shogunate created a political situation like that of Kamakura by Yoritomo. It is even said that Iyeyasu himself in organising the new military régime made the system of the Kamakura Shogunate his model.

By the establishment of the Tokugawa Shogunate, no marked change occurred in the Emperor's position as supreme sovereign of the country as ever, but the Shogunate conducted the state business as the regent entrusted with the whole care of the island Empire, so that the government at Yedo had no occasion to refer to the court at Kyoto to obtain the imperial sanction. In this respect the Shogunate of Yedo was decidedly more independent of the Imperial Court than had been the Kamakura Shogunate. Kyoto, however, continued as before to be the fountain-head of all honour. All the honours and titles

of the *daimyo* were conferred in the name of the reigning Emperor, though through the intermediary of the Shogunate. The appellations of these distinctions were also the same as those given to court-nobles, only being comparatively low in the case of the former, if we take the real influence of the *daimyo* into consideration. For the emoluments of court-nobles in the time of the Tokugawa were generally very small, and the highest of them could only match materially with the middle class of the *hatamoto* or the high class vassals of some powerful *daimyo*. All the manorial estates which the court-nobles had retained until the middle of the Ashikaga period had since been occupied by warriors paramount in the respective regions, and they changed their master several times during the anarchical disorders at the end of the period, so that restitution became utterly impossible. The total amount which the Shogunate at Yedo had to pay to the court-nobles as annual honoraria was about eighty thousand *koku*.

The Imperial Household had a civil list amounting at first to one hundred thousand *koku*, which was more than three times what it had been at the time of the Ashikaga. A little later it was increased to three hundred thousand *koku*, and the sum remained stationary at that figure for more than half a century. Then an annual subsidy in cash between thirty and forty thousand *ryô* was added. The Empress had to be provided

for separately. When there was an ex-Emperor or Crown Prince, then he also was entitled to a separate allowance from Yedo. If we include, therefore, the emolument paid to the court-nobles, and estimate them all together by the number of *koku,* the Shogunate had to pay to Kyoto an annual sum of between four and five hundred thousand. Extraordinary expenditures, such as the rebuilding of the imperial palace, were also part of the burden of the Shogunate. On the whole, the financial condition of the court at Kyoto was somewhat more straitened than that of the most powerful *daimyo.*

With his income as stated the Emperor maintained his court, and performed historical ceremonies, each prescribed for a certain day of a certain season. He did not need to trouble himself about state affairs, for all such matters had been delegated *de facto* to the Shogunate, or rather the Shogun behaved himself as if he were the sole agent of the Emperor. To have direct communication with the Emperor had been forbidden to all *daimyo.* The Shogun, on his part, entrusted everything concerning local affairs to the *daimyo.* As to the judicial procedure, that of the Shogunate was taken as the model by all *daimyo.* There still prevailed a great many peculiarities in each particular territory in the ways of legislation and its enforcement, so that Japan of that time presented a most motley aspect as regards legal matters, like France under the an-

cient régime. The power of the *daimyo* to impose taxes and raise contributions was restricted by no explicit law, and therefore had been exercised rather arbitrarily. When in financial stress, he could freely make applications, approaching to commands, to some of his well-to-do subjects, whatever the cause of his pecuniary embarrassment might be. Besides he could coin money, if its use were limited to his own territory. No need to say that notes were also abundantly issued by his treasurer for circulation within his territory as substitutes for the legal tender. In time of peace the *samurai* under a *daimyo* served their lord in his territorial government as civil officials. They, however, being warriors by nature, had to be constantly trained in military arts, with various weapons, among which swords and spears were preferred as the most practical. Archery had not been abandoned entirely, and the bow and arrow was still held to be the emblem of the noble calling of warriors, but this sort of weapon had never been used on battle-fields since the beginning of the Tokugawa period, so that the art had become on the whole ceremonial. The use of fire-arms introduced at the end of the Ashikaga epoch became rapidly general all over the country. Gunners were employed, as archers formerly had been, in opening a battle, and then made way for the attack of the infantry. Shooting was considered in the Tokugawa period to be more practical than archery, but as there was

little space for showing personal bravery in the practice of this art, it was not highly encouraged among the *samurai*. Though fighting on horseback had not been prevalent on the battle-field since the middle Ashikaga, commanders at least continued to ride, so that horsemanship was a requisite art of the *samurai* in the Tokugawa age, especially among its higher grades. It should be here well noticed the *jûjutsu*, which is now very celebrated all over the world as a military art originated and cultivated by the Japanese, did not much attract the attention of the orthodox Tokugawa warriors, for it was thought to be an art useful in arresting culprits, and therefore good only for lower *samurai* or those below them in rank, who were generally in charge of the police business in all territories.

With such military accomplishments, the *samurai* of the period were to serve their territorial master in time of war as leaders and fighters, for it was still the age in which all warriors were expected to display a personal bravery, parallel to their ability to lead and command troops, as in medieval Europe. As there had been neither external nor civil war, however, for more than two centuries since the semi-religious insurrection at Shimabara in Kyushu was subdued in the year 1638, war was prepared for only as an imaginary possibility, and not as a probable emergency. The *samurai* of all territories, therefore, though said to be on a constant war footing, were not trained

as they should have been. We see indeed the division of them into fighting groups and the appointment of a leader for each group in times of peace. But there was no manœuvring nor any training of a like kind in tactical movements. The only military exercise approaching it was the hunting of wild game or the sham hunting which ended in cruelly sacrificing dogs, and even these sports were not practised frequently. That those pieces of Japanese armour, which foreigners can now see in many museums in Europe and America, had been long found to be a sort of thing rather inconvenient to wear in this country, yet had nevertheless continued to be a furniture indispensable to every household of *samurai* and to be embellished with an exquisite workmanship, proves how academically war had been regarded in those far-off days. It can be easily gathered from the above statement that the *samurai* of the time were more civil functionaries than fighting men. Their real status, however, being warriors and not civilians, they were constantly subjected to martial law. They had to serve their master always with all their might, holding themselves responsible with their lives, as if they were on the battlefield facing the enemy. Many examples may be cited from the history of the age of *samurai* suicides, committed on account of some misdemeanour or the mismanagement of the civil administration confided to him. In effect, an armed peace reigned throughout the Empire.

CHAPTER XII

TOKUGAWA SHOGUNATE, CULTURE AND SOCIETY

In the previous chapter I have dwelt on the military and political organisation of the time of the Tokugawa Shogunate somewhat more fully than was appropriate for a book of such small compass as this. What was then the civilisation, which had been supported and sheltered by this organisation and régime? That must be told subsequently.

As the well-planned military régime of the Shogunate can be said to have been based on the assumption that war was a far-distant possibility, an imaginary danger, and as at the same time the Shogunate had watched jealously not to stir up *daimyo* and *samurai* to so warlike a pitch of self-confidence that they would believe themselves able to cope with the Shogun, there had lain the chief difficulty of sustaining the martial spirit of the nation in full strength, that is to say, of continuing the military régime as it had been at first. There were of course several gradations in the intensity of the fighting spirit of the people in different localities of the country. In both extremities of the Empire, in the south of Kyushu

and in the north of Honto, where civilisation was rather at a low ebb, the martial spirit had continued not much abated since the time of the Ashikaga. On both sides of the boundary of two such adjoining territories, a difference of dialect was clearly perceivable, and an acute hostile feeling against each other prevailed. People were not allowed to marry their neighbors beyond the frontier, and this rule was strictly applied to all members of the warrior-class. In brief, they were always staring each other in the face, as if ready to fight at any time. As to the greater part of the Empire, however, including the territories situated between the two extremities, that is to say, in those regions of the country where the people were more enlightened, no such animosity between the peoples of neighboring *daimyo* was to be noticed. There marriages had been contracted freely between the subjects of different lords, a relationship which could only arise from the assumption that most probably there would occur no war between the two *daimyo,* and there would be no fear of such marriages becoming an awkward connection. Adjoining territories maintaining such intimate relations, being connected by the personalities of the inhabitants, should be considered not as quasi-independent states ranged side by side and in dangerous rivalry, verging almost on belligerency, but as neighboring governmental departments in the same well-centralised state. It may be gathered from these data that

the more enlightened and by far the greater part of the Japanese nation were so peace-loving, that they organised all their ways of living on the assumption of a permanent peace. And that absolute peace had verily continued for more than two centuries in a country said to have been dominated by an absolute military régime, more than testifies how averse is the Japanese nation from wanton warfare. Foreigners should ponder this irrefutable fact in the history of Japan, a fact which can not elsewhere be found in abundance even in the history of European and American states, before they calumniate our nation as the most bellicose and dangerous in the world.

Without doubt Japan under the Tokugawa Shogunate was a country governed by a military régime, feudalistic in form, but in truth peace brooded over the land, the utmost peace which could be expected from any military régime. As tranquillity had continued so long, our civilisation had been able meanwhile to make a wonderful progress. If war can be eulogised with some justice to be a stimulating and compulsive factor of civilisation, with no less certainty peace may be complimented as a factor, the most efficient, in fostering the same. In the preceding chapters I have spoken of the propagation of culture throughout the country, notwithstanding its anarchical condition, and of that very culture, which was in the main humanistic. This humanistic culture had now its successor in a civilisation higher

in form and in quality. That the progress was apparently retarded for a while on account of wars, which rapidly succeeded one after another at the end of the Ashikaga, was a phenomenon that was only temporary. How could a few patches of straw floating on the surface stop the forward movement of a strong undercurrent, however slowly the stream might run? Mingled with the clash and clang of arms, an exquisite music embodying the ever advancing civilisation of our country had been heard; though at first very faintly audible, it grew louder and louder till it became sonorous enough to make the whole nation vibrate when the clamorous battle-cry of the warriors had subsided. In short, Japan had been steadily advancing, and it was indeed those warriors themselves who carried the torch of civilisation farther and farther onward. Many historians ascribed it solely to the individual exertion of Iyeyasu, that learning had been revived since the beginning of the seventeenth century. Seeing, however, that those *samurai* who fought with and under him had rarely been noted for the excellence of their literary acquirements, it can hardly be supposed that he had been deeply interested in promoting learning and culture among his entourage. Neither did he himself leave any trace of his having received a higher degree of liberal education than the average generals of his times. It is too notorious a fact to doubt that he earnestly encouraged learning and ordered many books to

be reprinted. Yet it is also clear that his encouragement was very efficient, mainly because his position as the sole military and political master of Japan enabled him to figure as a patron of the arts. The fact that before his authority as a military dictator became incontestably established, the reprint of various books had been going on almost without intermission, and that the two Emperors Go-Yôzei and Go-Midzunowo and also Kanetsugu Naoye, a warrior who had grown up in the remote province of Yechigo, were among the most ardent patrons of learning by the encouragement they gave to the reprinting of standard works, testifies that Iyeyasu did not stand alone in encouraging liberal education. After all, it should be fairly said that the first Shogun of the Tokugawa did only what ought to have been done by him, or what the nation had a right to expect from a person in a position such as his. In 1593, that is to say, five years before the death of Hideyoshi, the Emperor Go-Yôzei ordered the so-called old text of the *Hsiao-king* to be reprinted in wooden type. This was the first book in our country printed with movable type, so far as can be said with certainty. As to the types themselves which the Emperor resorted to in his scholastic undertaking, we have reason to suppose that they had been seized in Korea as a prize of war and brought to this country by the expeditionary troops which Hideyoshi had sent thither in the previous year. Korea had been looked upon

through the Ashikaga period by the Japanese as a country more advanced in culture than Japan in those days. We read in our history about the repeated applications addressed by the Ashikaga Shogunate to the Korean government, not only for the donation of a complete set of the Buddhist Tripitaka reprinted in that country, but also the blocks themselves used in that reprinting. To the latter of these two requests, the peninsular government flatly declined to accede. To the former, however, they acquiesced as many times as they could manage, so that we see now here and there volumes of the sutras which had been sent as presents by the Korean government before the seventeenth century. The method of printing with movable types had been introduced into Korea of course from China, and types made of wood as well as of clay had long been in use there. It seems to have been those wooden types which our warriors fetched home, and the fact that such vehicles of learning had been taken as a war-prize by these soldiers indicates that they were not totally indifferent to the cultivation of letters.

In 1597, four years after the reprinting of the afore-said *Hsiao-king,* the same Emperor ordered again many other books to be reprinted. Among those then thus reproduced were not only several books of Confucian classical literature and other Chinese works, literary as well as medical, but some Japanese books, such as the first volume of the *Nihongi* and a work on Japanese political

institutions written by Chikafusa Kitabatake, a court-noble in the time of the Emperor Go-Daigo, who was noted for his unwavering fidelity to the Emperor and for his education, being the author of the celebrated history called *Jingô-shôtôki.* Many of these books seem to have been re-issued within the same year, which was one year previous to the death of Hideyoshi, and the types used this time were made in our country after the Korean models. Most probably the types captured in Korea as prizes did not long suffice to satiate the increasing desire of the Emperor, aroused by his deep interest in books.

The next step in the improvement of Japanese printing followed the same course as it had in Europe, that is to say, the use of metallic types. The first attempt in this improved method was made by the aforesaid Kanetsugu Naoye, head of the vassals of the house of Uyesugi, who was at that time lord of Yonezawa. The book which Naoye ordered to be reprinted was the celebrated Chinese literary glossary called the *Wen-hsüan,* which literally means selected literary pieces, in verse as well as in prose. This reprint was put into execution at Fushimi in the year 1606, which was the fourth year of the Shogunate of Iyeyasu, and the metallic material then used in casting the types was copper. With him as the precursor, several patrons of learning followed in his wake. Among the most noted of them were Iyeyasu himself and the Emperor Go-Midsunowo. This Em-

peror, who was the son and successor of the Emperor Go-Yôzei, imitated his father in encouraging the reproduction of books with type, not of wood but of copper as Naoye had done. The book printed under the imperial auspices in 1621 was the fifteen volumes of a Chinese lexicon after the block print issued in China of the Sung dynasty. Prior, however, to the undertaking of the Emperor, Iyeyasu, as ex-Shogun, ordered reprints to be made with copper types at his residential town of Sumpu, now called Shidzuoka, in the province of Suruga. The books reprinted there in 1615 and 1616 were the index of the complete series of the Buddhist Tripitaka and the Extracts from Various Chinese Classics. Besides these, it should be mentioned in his honour as a patron of learning, that he ordered more than one hundred thousand pieces of wooden types to be manufactured for the reprinting of various useful books. From 1599, the year before the decisive battle of Sekigahara, until the end of his Shogunate, Iyeyasu's agent at Fushimi carried on the printing of books with movable wooden types without any cessation. Among the books reprinted there were the *Adzuma-kagami,* the record of the earlier Kamakura Shogunate, a Chinese political miscellany written at the beginning of the T'ang dynasty, and some old Chinese strategical works.

Not only such illustrious personages as the above-mentioned Emperors, Shogun, and eminent

warriors, but men of mediocre means or of unpretentious rank, such as *samurai,* priests, literati and merchants, also vied with one another in publishing new and old books of Japan as well as of China, by the method of woodblocks or of movable types. Among wealthy merchants the most renowned at that time as the Mecaenas of arts and learning was Yoichi Suminokura. He was born of a rich family living in a suburb of Kyoto, and was himself an enterprising merchant. Moreover, his accomplishments in the Chinese classics and in Japanese versification were far ahead of the average literati of the time, and his skill in calligraphy has been said to be almost incomparable. Out of the immense fortune which he had amassed by trading with continental countries as far as Tonkin and Cochin-China, he spent great sums freely in publishing books, the greater part of which were works famous in Japanese literature. It is said that more than twenty sorts of books were issued by him alone, counting in all several hundred volumes.

What most attracts our attention in his undertakings, however, is the fact that all of these books were printed, not in the movable type then in vogue, but in the wood-block style of old. The new method of printing with type, though introduced several years back and assiduously encouraged by many influential persons, had not been able to demonstrate its advantages to the full. In each edition, whoever might have been the pub-

lisher, the number of copies issued had generally not exceeded two hundred, and that the number was so small shows at the same time the narrowness of the reading circle of that age. It proves also that Japan was not yet in any urgent need of seeing books suddenly multiplied by the busy use of movable types. Moreover, many inconveniences, not known in the typography of the West, manifested themselves in the adoption of the new method in a country like the Japan of that time, where Chinese ideographs had been used almost exclusively as the necessary vehicle for expressing thought. We had to provide a great variety of fonts of types, each type-face representing a special ideograph, so that a far larger and more varied assortment of fonts was required than in the case where an alphabet is in use, not to mention that the total number of types had to be enormously augmented out of the necessity of having numerous multiples of the same type. To print sundry accessories alongside Chinese texts, in order to make them easily legible for Japanese students, was another difficulty which was found almost insuperable in the adoption of movable types. The desire of some editors to insert illustrations could not also be fulfilled easily, if the text was to be printed in type, for setting the blocks together with type was considered a very irksome business at a time when printing in type was still in its infancy. They would rather have preferred the single use of wood-blocks to using

them together with types. Lastly, as regards those literary works by Japanese authors which Suminokura had fondly put into print, that is to say, in cases where the editor's chief care was the reproduction in facsimile of the manuscript originally executed in fine calligraphic style, movable types entirely failed to serve the purpose. All these disadvantages conspired indeed to frustrate the development of the printing in type, so that the new method was set aside soon after its introduction until the end of the Shogunate. It is certain, however, that the introduction of the use of types in printing, though to a very limited extent, contributed none the less to the general progress of civilisation in Japan, in multiplying books and in stimulating the thirst for knowledge on the part of the general public.

There is no doubt whatever that, in the number of books published in Japan, the beginning of the seventeenth century far surpassed the end of the sixteenth. Bookstores, where books were sold, bought, edited, and published, were now to be found in Kyoto and Yedo, and their business became lucrative enough to be continued as an independent calling. Here the question must naturally arise, how were those multiplied books distributed? There were, besides the priests, especially those belonging to the Zen sect, not a few professional literati, who pursued learning as their chief business. Secretaries in the chancellories of the Shogun and of various *daimyo* had been

generally recruited from that class. Their number, however, had remained comparatively insignificant for a long time during the earlier part of the Shogunate, and they had been classified rather into an exclusive society, which included physicians and Buddhist priests. They had been treated as servants engaged in reading and writing, and not respected as advisers nor revered as leaders of the spirit of the age. However noble might be the profession in which they were engaged, still they were mere professional men, considered good to serve and not apt to lead. The increase in number of such men of letters, it is true, was the cause and the effect of the rise of the cultural level of the country, for it clearly denoted that Japan had begun to appreciate learning more highly than before and hence to demand more of these learned men. But that increase must have naturally stopped short, unless the learning which they taught was imbibed by the people at large and made itself a necessary ingredient of the national life, that is to say, unless the general public had gained thereby more of enlightenment.

For such a continual progress Japan was quite ready. Within half a century, our country had been transformed from an anarchical country of interminable wars to a peaceful land, a land which was non-militaristic to the utmost, though under one of the most elaborate military régimes. That it had been "shut up" against foreign intercourse was, in its main motive, not to ward off the in-

filtration of Western civilisation in general, but only to achieve a peaceful national progress undisturbed by any intervention of scheming foreign missionaries. The Shogun, who ought to have continued as a military dictator, had been turned into a potentate who cared the least for military matters, though here lurked the danger of losing his *raison d'être* against the Emperor at Kyoto. The "wisest fool" in Japan was Tsunayoshi, the fifth Shogun of the Tokugawa, who not only founded a college and a shrine for the spirit of Confucius at Yushima in Yedo, the site where now the Educational Museum stands, but was very fond of playing the savant, and himself delivered lectures commenting on Confucian texts before the assembled *daimyo* in duty bound to listen to him. With a Shogun like him at the head of the government, it should by no means be wondered at that the cultivation of Chinese literature, which formed the greater part of the learning of the time, came into vogue among all of those belonging to the military régime, the *daimyo* and the *samurai* of various sorts and grades. Moreover, the *samurai* of the age themselves, though they professed to be warriors as ever in their essential character, and their training in military exercises had never really significantly relaxed, had ceased to be fighting men by profession as of yore, on account of the long-continued tranquillity. Notwithstanding the fact that the reason they had been honoured and re-

spected by the common people was mainly because they were serving the country through their master, the *daimyo,* at the possible hazard of their lives, they had been obliged gradually not to rely on their martial valour only, but to mould their character and improve their ability, so as to befit themselves to become capable officials, administrators, nay, even statesmen in their own territory and well-bred gentlemen in private life, so as to furnish models to the common people by their personal examples. As they had read Chinese works mainly for this purpose, the kinds of books read were naturally limited, the most preferred being those pertaining to morals and politics, that is to say, Confucian literature and the histories of various Chinese dynasties, all of which were pragmatic enough. Their literary culture, therefore, tended to become rigid, narrow, and utilitarian, though very serious in intention. At first sight it must seem a very paradoxical matter that the learning which had been essentially humanistic in the Ashikaga period should have taken so utilitarian a tendency in the age directly following it. If we, however, once think of the Italian Renaissance metamorphosed into the German Reformation, when it got northward over the Alps, we need not be much embarrassed to understand the seemingly abrupt transition in our country.

It should also be noted that utilitarian studies had not formed the whole of the literary culture of the Tokugawa age. Since the very beginning

of the Shogunate down to its fall the humanistic studies handed down by the preceding age had never been entirely swept away from the land. The utilitarian studies above cited had been almost exclusively pursued by those *samurai* standing directly under the Shogun or under the powerful *daimyo* whose territories were big enough to be administered as quasi-independent states, and whose governments were on such a scale as to need high statesmanship in order to be well managed. In other words, those who had devoted themselves to the study of the serious sorts of literature had been generally men to whom some opportunities might have been given for allowing them to put into practice what they had learned from books. If these larger territories were to be compared with Prussia and other kingdoms and middle states in the German Confederation, the small states in the same political body would make good counterparts of the petty territories of minor *daimyo* in Japan. As to those *samurai* serving the minor *daimyo,* it had been difficult to make them interested in the perusal of Chinese political works, for their sphere of action was not wide enough to require the territorial affairs being conducted according to high and delicate policies emanating from a profound political principle. In this respect they had much in common with their colleagues residing in the domains directly belonging to the Shogunate. As the governor-in-chief and his principal assistants in each

domain had not been taken from the residents of each district, but despatched thither from Yedo, the *samurai* attached to the locality were merely employed to serve the government of their own district as low-class officials, so that they had little or no hand even in local politics. Some of these *samurai* were landed proprietors, who, being rich and having little serious business to demand their attention, had ample means and time to dip into books, which could hardly have been of the kind causing self-constraint, for their first motive in reading was only for the sake of distraction. The landed gentry, under the *samurai* in rank, though wealthier, and generally in charge of village affairs and in control of lesser farmers and peasants, were also found numerously in the domains. They too were the sort of people to be classified in the same catagory as the *samurai* of the domains. The *samurai* and gentry gathered in and around second-rate towns in large territories belonging to powerful *daimyo* may be included also in the same group. It may be, however, premature to suppose that only books belonging to light literature were welcomed by those who resided in districts where the military régime had the least hold. Serious works, such as ethical treatises, for instance, which abound in Chinese literature, were also read there, but rather for the purpose of occupying themselves with metaphysical speculations about moral questions, than in order to regulate their own conduct, pri-

vate or public, according to the principles taught in them. In short, their thirst for knowledge was purely for the sake of enjoying an intellectual pleasure thereby, and therefore had been quite humanistic. It was here that the true inheritors of the culture of the later Ashikaga were to be sought, and not in places where the influence of the regular *samurai* was paramount. Needless to say, the centre of this humanistic culture was Kyoto, whose signifiance as the political capital had already been lost, while Yedo represented at its best the culture of the *samurai*. The Chinese books preferred by these humanistic dillettanti were those pertaining to rhetoric and poetry. They were greatly addicted to practising these branches of literature. Art for art's sake also found a better patron among such people than in the courts of the Shogun and of influential *daimyo,* where art had rather an applied meaning, represented in ornamental things such as screen and wall paintings down to the miniature-art of the *tsuba* and the *netsuke*. Wandering poets, rhetoricians, calligraphers, and artists of various crafts were wont to be far better harboured in districts where the humanistic culture prevailed, than in Yedo or in the residential towns of powerful *daimyo,* where politics and discipline were all-important. The most significant difference between the two sorts of culture was manifested in a special branch of art, that of painting. In the military circles, the painting of the Kano

school was preferred, which was rather rigid in style and had some tincture of the taste highly prized by the Zen-sect priests. On the other hand, what was in vogue among the non-military circles was the so-called "Bunjin-gwa," or paintings of the school of "literati-painters," which were introduced at the beginning of the Tokugawa period from China, and were characterised by the mellowness of tone prevailing in them and also by a lack of the professional flavour.

Besides these two distinct cultural circles, there arose a third group of people, who entered the cultured arena in the latter half of the seventeenth century. I mean the bourgeois class in several large cities. After the decline of the trade of the historic city of Sakai, brought about by the hard blow struck at the root of the political power of her haughty merchants by Nobunaga, and caused also by the growth of a rival in the great commercial city of Ôsaka founded by Hideyoshi quite near it, the refined humanistic culture cherished by the citizens of Sakai vanished with its prosperity. After that, it took a considerable while to witness the revival of the cultural influence of the bourgeois class in Japan. The tranquillity, however, which the Tokugawa Shogunate had brought on our country, did not fail to cause such a revival, though not again in Sakai, yet at least in the two greatest commercial centres of the empire. The one was Yedo on the east, and the other Ôsaka on the west. Of these two cities,

in affluence Ôsaka, on account of its geographical advantages, was several steps ahead of Yedo. Not only was it near Kyoto, the centre of the humanistic culture as ever, but its remoteness from Yedo had induced its merchants to become more independent than those in the Shogun's own city of the influence of the strong military régime. The culture fostered in the city, therefore, was nearer to that of the non-military circles than that of Yedo. Nay, Ôsaka went still further, even by a great many steps, than Yedo. It was here that Monzayemon Chikamatsu, the first and the greatest dramatist Japan has ever produced, demonstrated his peerless talent at the end of the seventeenth century, and here was also one of the cradles of the modern Japanese theatre. Yedo, however, could not remain long alien to this fresh cultural current initiated in Kyoto and Ôsaka. On account of its growing prosperity brought on by the constant comings in and out of hundreds of *daimyo* and their numerous retinues, the newly started political capital was soon enabled to rival the senior city of Ôsaka in the liveliness of its urban social life, and in some respects surpassed that of Kyoto. The plutocrats of Ôsaka had also a very close relation with the military régime. This relation, however, consisted in lending large sums of money to various *daimyo,* many of whom had their warehouses there to deposit therein the produce of their territory, used as pledges for getting advances of money from those

merchants, and on that account their pay-masters with their staffs were stationed there to enable them to transact the customary financial business. On the other hand, the merchants of Yedo generally profited by providing, as purveyors and contractors, necessary commodities to the Shogunate and to the *daimyo,* and therefore depended more closely on the military régime, though some of them also advanced money as did the merchants of Ôsaka. It is said that the richest bourgeois of Yedo, who had amassed immense sums of money at the beginning of the nineteenth century were those who had advanced their moneys at a very high rate of interest to a great many needy *hatamoto,* who were obliged to garnishee to those merchants their allowances in rice from the Shogunate at fixed intervals, in order to steer securely through stretches of low water or through the straits of Hard-Times in their household economy. On the whole, however, we see a great difference in that the merchants of Yedo were the patronised party in their relations with the warrior-class, while those of Ôsaka were mostly creditors and the military men their debtors. But whatever might have been their difference in general character from the merchants of Ôsaka, the commercial aristocrats of Yedo, induced by their opulence to live a leisurely and very luxurious life, could not fail to become gradually patrons of the bourgeois arts and literature, merely tinged by a little more of the martial element than those of Ôsaka.

Three cultural currents thus ran parallel to one another in the history of the modern civilisation of our country, that of the orthodox *samurai* with its centre in Yedo, that of court-nobles and county-gentry flowing from Kyoto as its source, and lastly that of the commercial class with its stronghold in Ôsaka. If these three currents had remained irrelative to one another to the last; if, in other words, they had continued for long to belong specially to one of the three distinct and exclusive groups of the nation, then the historic revolution of the Meidji era would not have been effected, and Japan might be in a state but half medieval and half modern. Fortunately, class distinction in our country was not, at that time, so rigid as to hamper absolutely the amalgamation of different classes, and a certain type of culture, which had for a time been but a speciality of one particular class, soon ceased to be so, and was extended to the other classes, and the process necessarily led to the fusion of all the cultures of different types. As one of the causes which hastened such an amalgamation must be mentioned the intermarriage of people of different classes.

At the time when Chinese legislation was first implanted in Japanese soil, there were still minute restrictions concerning interclass-marriages in the Statutes of the Taïhô. Though mésalliances were not forbidden by any explicit law, the offspring of such marriages between freemen and slaves were to follow in class the parent of infe-

rior rank. It is evident, therefore, that such an alliance was stigmatised and severely checked. As to the intermarriages between different classes of freemen, there had been no such restraint, even with respect to the status of their children. That the custom, however, of choosing the empress from members of the Imperial family only, to the exclusion of all vassal families, became gradually confirmed, and that the same custom continued intact until the beginning of the eighth century, shows how such mésalliances had been discouraged in the ancient days of our history. The crowning of a daughter of the Fujiwara as the consort of the Emperor Shômu was the first violation of the long-kept traditional usage regarding the Imperial marriage; and since that time marriages had become very irregular, not only among the members of the Imperial family, but also among the courtiers. The social status of a father was considered sufficient by itself to determine that of his children. No legal scrutiny was thought necessary as to what kind of a woman their mother was, though it was self-evident that the higher the social position of the family from which she sprang, the more the children she gave birth to would be honoured. The establishment of the military régime could effect but very slight change in this domain of social usage, until the beginning of the Tokugawa Shogunate. It must be attributed to this neglect of the maternal lineage in the consideration of pedigrees, that in the

most genealogical records of Japan the names of wives, mothers, and daughters are generally omitted, notwithstanding that we are able to trace the names of the male ancestors, sometimes for more than ten centuries backward with tolerable certainty and exactitude.

The establishment of the Shogunate by the Tokugawa could not affect to any great extent the social position of women in general, for in that domain radical alterations were not to be expected from the age in which militarism was all-powerful. There was one thing, however, which was worthy of special notice, concerning the new usage of marriage among the *daimyo*. As to the right of inheriting their territories, the preference, it is true, had been on the side of the offspring of a legal marriage, for it could not have been otherwise in a society in which the right of primogeniture had been just established for the sake of maintaining the order intact. Yet there existed no rigorous rule through the whole history of the Shogunate, which might be said to have aimed at discouraging mésalliances, and the natural sons of the *daimyo* were by no means deprived of their right of inheritance on account of the mean origin of their mother. The Shogunate, however, interfered in the marriages of the *daimyo,* and all of them were obliged to take unto themselves consorts from families of equal rank, that is to say, the legal wife of a *daimyo* had to be a daughter or sister of another *diamyo,* one of

his equals. Some of the higher *daimyo,* especially those of the blood of Tokugawa, often married daughters of court-nobles, for the purpose of keeping the latter in close relation with the Shogunate. In the military peerage list of the time the wife of every ruling *daimyo* had her place together with the heir, alongside of her husband, though even in this case her name used to be omitted, while that of the heir was given. In spite of the fact, therefore, that the intermarriage of the people of different territories had often been prohibited by territorial laws, those *daimyo* themselves who were desirous of enforcing those laws were obliged to find their legal wives outside of their territory, in other words, to contract an interterritorial marriage. Such a marriage within the circle of the *daimyo* had of course very little to do with the territorial politics of the *daimyo* concerned, for most of the ladies chosen as brides were those who had been brought up in their father's residence at Yedo, and after their marriage they had to remain in the same city as hostages to the Shogunate, and not allowed to leave it for their territory. Moreover, as the marriage of the *daimyo* received the close supervision of the Shogunate, they could have borne very little, if any, political meaning of a sort which might be attached to the intermarriages of different royal families in Europe. Culturally speaking, however, such a marriage had the effect of levelling the ways of living of various *diamyo,*

and making them similar to one another. The bride was usually accompanied into her husband's family by maids, the daughters of her father's vassals, and she was often escorted by a few *samurai.* These *samurai* as well as the maids often took service under the *daimyo,* the husband of the bride, and remained in the train of their lord, after the death of the lady whom they had to serve personally. The number of the *samurai* who changed masters in this manner, was not naturally large, but they contributed none the less toward the diminishing of the differences in the social life of the various territories.

Generally, however, it was found very difficult for any *samurai* to leave his master for the purpose of enlisting in the service of some other *daimyo.* As the *samurai* had been bound to their lord the *daimyo,* not only publicly as his officials and warriors, but privately as his domestics, they were not allowed to emigrate freely from their lord's territory. Nevertheless, the legal status of the *samurai* versus the *daimyo* had never been the relation of slave and master. No *daimyo* had absolute control over the person of his *samurai,* in other words, his sway was far from what might have been called full proprietorship. Against injustice on the part of a *daimyo,* his *samurai* had the actual right of appealing to the Shogunate at the risk of suffering a heavy penalty for his affronting his lord by so doing. It was also possible to alienate himself from the service of his

master by giving sufficient reasons for it. If he had no reason to do so, then he could abscond, and the extradition of such a deserter was hardly ever rigorously pressed. And if such a vagrant *samurai* or *rônin* was found to be a capable warrior or a man of talent in some other line, he could find a position very easily under the *daimyo* of his adopted territory. In such and like ways the *samurai* of the Tokugawa period made inter-territorial migration more freely than we imagine.

If, concluding from the limited sphere of freedom of the *samurai* in regard to change of domicile, one should suppose that farmers, merchants, and craftsmen were much more restricted in their moving about inter-territorially, he would be grossly deceived. The *samurai* was *de facto* linked almost inseparably to their lord the *daimyo,* for the link had been firmly cemented, though not by any formal oath of fealty uttered by the *samurai,* as was the custom in European countries, but by the hereditary relation between his family and that of his master. It became especially so when profound peace settled on Japan during the middle of the Tokugawa period, and if any *daimyo* had given his *samurai* the freest choice to leave his territory, very few of them would have availed themselves of their freedom, for by doing so they would have had to part with a great many things which they had long cherished in their hearts. On the whole, the *samurai* were attached to their *daimyo* and not to the soil on

which they had settled, so that when their master was removed to some new territory by the order of the Shogunate, most of the *samurai* used to follow their lord and serve him in the new locality. The dialectic peculiarities, which have been vanishing in Japan very rapidly these years, show still a trace of these *samurai* migrations. If any foreigner should remark a considerable difference in dialect between some provincial town and its suburbs, it shows that the family of the *daimyo* who was the last to lord it over the territory, was one transplanted there together with the attendant train of *samurai* by order of the Shogunate in a time not so very remote.

Quite contrary to *samurai* usage, those people below them in rank held with the *daimyo* of the territory in which they lived a relationship which was purely public in character. Socially they were treated as men beneath the *samurai,* and they themselves were content to be treated as such. As a class, however, they had no personal relations with the *daimyo,* unless through the *samurai,* to whom the unsufruct of the land which they cultivated had been allotted by the *daimyo.* In other words, their duty to their territorial lord was nothing but that which they owed as a people governed to a governor who chanced to rule hereditarily over the territory, but might at any time be displaced by somebody else at the pleasure of the Shogunate. Fidelity on their part to the *daimyo,* therefore, was no personal obligation,

nor the result of a reciprocal contract, but only a product of a long history, if any example of such virtue were exhibited. They had no need to follow their *daimyo* as his *samurai* used to do, whithersover he might be transferred. On the contrary, all of them remained as a rule in the old territory, in which they continued for long years to pursue their business, and welcomed the newly-appointed *daimyo*. In this respect they might be said to have been much more fixed to the territory than the *samurai*. At the same time, as their relations with the *daimyo* were not very close, their movements were not so vigilantly watched as those of the *samurai*, and during the Tokugawa period, there went on incessant goings and comings of the lower order in and out of various territories, though very insignificant in character and therefore apparently unnoticed. Summarily speaking, the boundary of the territories of the *daimyo* was of no practical value in restricting the population within its geographical pale, in spite of the fact that all *daimyo*, without exception, exercised their right of scrutinising the ingress and egress of travellers at certain fixed barriers on the boundary line. Viewed from the standpoint of the internal migration of people of all classes, Japan was far from being an agglomeration of isolated territories. No wonder that the contemporary culture, springing up from whichever of the three possible sources, could not remain secluded within the confines of particular

localities, but gradually permeated the country in every direction, and became one.

Not only inter-territorially, but also in each of the territories themselves, no sort of culture could hold itself for long as the exclusive property of a certain class. In our history, it is true, we had retained a class-system for a very long time, even after the revolution of the Meidji era, and all men had not been equal before the law until very recent times. Nay, to this day we see still some harmless relics of that system in certain regulations preferential to the aristocracy. Regarded as a whole, however, the class-system in Japan has never approached the caste-system of some other countries. If there had been anything like that in our country, it was the distinction of the ordinary people, or we might say, people of the Japanese *pur sang,* from those whose blood was thought to be polluted. Marriage with the latter set of people had been scrupulously avoided on the part of the former. This antipathy entertained by the majority of the nation against the minority was nearly of the same nature as the anti-Semitic feeling in Europe. The coincidence between the two went so far that in Japan tanners, executioners, and so forth were considered as men of occupations exclusive to the people of polluted blood, just as similar trades in Europe had been relegated to the Jews of the Middle Ages. From the fact that in the newly explored part of the empire, such as the northern part of

Honto, the settlements of the so-called people of polluted blood are very few, and therefore the feeling against them there is not so acute as it is in the central or most historic part of the empire, we may safely conclude that such a feeling had its origin in some racial difference and dates from the immemorial past. It is very strange that in Japan, where the population is unquestionably of mixed blood, such an antipathy against a certain set of people should have continued stubbornly even to the present day. On the other hand, we have sufficient grounds for believing that, in the course of our history, not a few people of the pure blood have been classed with the impure on account of some criminal action, or they mingled with the latter from some predilection, out of their own free will.

As to the people who were not stigmatised as impure of blood, it is very difficult to draw a boundary line distinct enough to divide them clearly according to their blood relationship. During the anarchical period of our history from the later Ashikaga to the beginning of the Tokugawa Shogunate, there took place a violent convulsion of the social strata, as the result of the disorder which reigned everywhere. Many talented plebeians had lucky chances to enlist as *samurai* in the service of some *daimyo,* while many of the scions of noted warrior families transformed themselves into plebeians, from disgust at their calling of men-slaughterers or from

disappointment in their ambitions as warriors. In the time which followed, that is to say, when social order was reëtablished, such a transmutation became exceedingly difficult, as might be supposed. Yet even since then it is not altogether a matter of sheer impossibility. Plebeians of rare merit, especially those who were skilled in certain branches of art and learning, were able to find their way upward without much difficulty. The word *"samurai"* which had meant a "warrior attending" came to denote a social rank above the plebeians, so that it could include those who pursued a profession which was far from being militaristic, such as men of letters, physicians, painters, *nô*-dancers and the like in the retinue of the *daimyo*. Many territorial bourgeois, too, transformed themselves into *samurai* by contributing large sums of money to the treasury of their lord, or by purchasing the rank from some poor inheritors of *samurai* blood who were reduced to extreme penury, so as to be no more able to serve their *daimyo* as honourable warriors.

Examples of *samurai* promoted to the *daimiate* are not numerous since the re-establishment of peace and the social order under the dictatorship of the Tokugawa, for it had become for everybody very difficult to distinguish himself highly by merits other than military, so as to justify sufficiently such a sudden promotion. Still at the beginning of the Tokugawa Shogunate there were many vacant territories, caused by the confiscation

of the territories of recalcitrant *daimyo*. Many families also lost their hereditary lands on account of the extinction of the male line, for the Shogunate did not at first recognise inheritance through an adopted son, a restriction which was later abrogated. Besides, the *daimyo* in general became wiser and more docile in order not to lose their estates on account of any misdemeanour toward the Shogun. As the result of such changes the later Shogun rarely had vacancies at his disposal by which he could create the new *daimyo*. If the Shogun had wished to promote somebody in spite of the lack of a vacant lordship, he had to part with a portion of his own demain, but this alienation of land from the Shogun could not be repeated too often without damage to the material resources of the Shogunate. Nevertheless, examples have not been wanting now and then, examples in which not only *samurai* but even plebeians also were promoted to the rank of *daimyo,* some of them owing to their due merits, or to the blood-relationship with the wives or the natural mother of some Shogun, others by courting the favour of their master. In short, the intruding upwards into the *daimyo* class was not a matter absolutely impossible for the people in the lower strata.

Inversely the descent to the lower social status was much easier than the ascent to the higher rank in any scale. Nay, for various reasons many persons had been obliged to climb down from their

original high position in society to a lower status. As the law of primogeniture grew rigorous in its enforcements on the *daimyo* and the *samurai,* the greater part of the scions belonging to these classes could only fully enjoy the privilege of the society in which they were born during childhood, unless extinction of the main line took place. Descendants of *daimyo* generally gravitated to *samurai* rank, and those of *samurai* had to turn themselves into plebeians, in so far as they did not merit to be called to service as independent *samurai.* Thus the sliding down of classes was necessitated by the law of succession. Could any line of social demarcation be drawn according to the difference of classes in the face of such shiftings upwards and downwards? If it was a difficult matter, then we cannot expect to find any sort of culture monopolised by a certain class to the last. In whichever stratum of society it might have originated, it was sure to penetrate sooner or later into the other classes, and at last the whole people of a territory absorbed a similar and uniform culture. No sort of territorial barriers or social cleavage proved efficient enough to impede the inter-penetration of any cultural movement.

This amalgamation of cultures different in their origins had been accelerated by the introduction of European civilisation. Though the free intercourse of the Japanese with Europeans had been cut short in the third decade of the seventeenth

century by the ordinances of the Shogunate, the country had never been absolutely closed against foreigners. No Japanese had been allowed to go abroad for any purpose whatever, but we continued to trade in the specially prescribed port of Nagasaki, not only with Chinese but also with Dutch merchants, though in very restricted forms. Thus while the Japanese had been struggling to mould the new national culture out of promiscuous elements which had existed from aforetime, they had been receiving the Western civilisation, not *en masse* but drop by drop, so that we had no need this time of the process of rumination in digesting the introduced exotic culture, as we had done as regards Chinese civilisation. The rigorous exclusion, carried to the utmost, of all Christian literature, whatever its relation to our religious tenets might have been, naturally induced men in authority to resort to the safest methods, that is to say, to restrict the kinds of books to be imported to the narrowest scope, and to limit their number to the smallest possible minimum. Accordingly, in the first half of the Tokugawa Shogunate, very few useful books were imported into our country, and the nation had, therefore, a very scanty opportunity of getting knowledge through books about things European. Yet the commodities which these Dutchmen brought to Deshima to be exchanged there or to be presented to the Shogun at Yedo, gave the Japanese who came in contact with them some idea about the

modes of life in Europe. Moreover, after the encouragement assiduously given to the study of things European by the Shogun Yoshimune, whose rule covered the greater part of the first half of the eighteenth century, the process of infiltration of Western culture through the narrow door of Nagasaki had become suddenly accelerated. As the encouragement had been induced by the material necessities of the nation, the study of that time about things European was naturally limited to those sciences which were indispensable to the daily life of the people and at the same time far from being spiritual, like astronomy, medicine, botany, and so forth. Would it be possible, however, to ward off successfully the spiritual side of a culture, while taking in the material side of the same with avidity, as if the two parts had not been interwoven inseparably as a single entity? Those branches of Western knowledge, which we did not welcome in the least, but which were none the less useful, as history, and political as well as military sciences became gradually known to the Japanese, though very fragmentarily and slowly. That the diplomatists of the Shogunate had been able to conclude with the foreign powers, which forced our doors to be opened to them against our will, treaties which, though evidently detrimental to our national honour, were the largest concessions we could obtain from them at that time, shows that they had not been entirely ig-

norant of the condition of the parties with which they had to treat.

Probably there are foreign readers who may entertain some doubt about the lack of the religious element in the Western civilisation which thus flowed into our country from the first half of the eighteenth century. They may well consider, however, the change of religious temperament both in Japan and in European countries, besides the strictest prohibition rigorously exercised by the Japanese authorities. The Thirty Years War, the beginning of which falls in the fourteenth year of the Shogunate of Hidetada, the son and successor of Iyeyasu, is said generally to be the last religious war in Europe fought seriously. But it cannot be denied that in the latter part of the long war, more political than religious elements predominated, and the age which followed the most desolatory war was characterised by its religious toleration. Could the Dutchmen, who were the only people privileged to trade with us, have been expected to set as their first aim the propagation of the Christianity of their Reformed Church rather than material gain by their commerce, as the Portuguese, Spaniards, and Italians are said to have done as regards their Catholicism at the end of the Ashikaga period?

Japan had also changed religiously in the same direction. The end of the Ashikaga period had witnessed many wars which may be called religious, very rare examples since the time of the

first introduction of Buddhism. Sectarians of Shinshû or Ikkôshû and of Nichirenshû often fought against one another. Some of them dared also to fight against powerful feudatories, and harassed them. Thus Japan was about to experience a struggle between the spiritual and the temporal powers, as Europe did in the Middle Ages. Nobunaga, therefore, gave countenance to Christian missionaries with a view to curbing the arrogance of Buddhist sectaries by the inroad of the new exotic religion. When the latter, however, proved not less dangerous to the political authority, it was interdicted by Hideyoshi. After all, the persecution of the Christians in Japan was not of religious nature, as in Europe, but essentially political. This explains why persecution could extirpate the seeds of Christianity sown so full of hope in Japan, in spite of its general failure in European countries.

The failure of the Christian propaganda, however, was at the same time the signal of the downfall of the influence of Buddhist sectaries in Japan. Iyeyasu, who had the most bitter experience of the resistance of Ikkô-votaries in his own province, had but to pursue the same religious policy as his predecessor, against Buddhism as well as Christianity. He ordered the personal morals of Buddhist priests to be rigorously supervised, and inflicted the severest punishment on those who violated the law of celibacy. It was natural, therefore, that secular preachers of the

Ikkôshû or Shinshû, who made it their rule to lead a matrimonial life, should not have been held in so high a regard as the regular priests of other Buddhist sects, and on that account they had to recruit their believers chiefly among people in the lower strata of society. As to other sects besides the Shinsû, he showed no preference for any one of them, and he often called himself a believer in Buddhism of the Syaka Sect, which meant that he was no sectarian, for there actually existed no such sect in Japan. Such a broad tolerance, however, in religious matters is next door to indifferentism, and paved the way for the dwindling of the religious spirit in the ages to follow, at least in the prominent part of the nation.

Another factor which strengthened the spirit of toleration, or let me say, undermined the religious spirit of the people, was the Confucian philosophy expounded by Chutse, a celebrated savant of the Sung dynasty. This doctrine, which had been accepted by the court-philosophers of the Shogunate as the only orthodox one, was rationalistic to the extreme, so that it struck a heavy blow to many cherished superstitions and destroyed in a remarkable manner the influence which Buddhism had exercised over the mind of the people since many centuries, just like the rationalism of the eighteenth century in Europe, which ruined the authority of the Church and superstition. Yet among the educated society of the age, that is to say, the *samurai* class, the worship

of Buddhist deities continued as before, superficially without any marked change, only because parents had worshipped them and taught their children to do likewise. That they had not been men strictly to be called Buddhist is evident from the fact that most of them had worshipped in Shinto shrines with almost the same devotion as they did in Buddhist temples. It cannot be denied that in their view of human life there was a preponderating Buddhist element, but as it had been since very long ago that our civilisation had become imbued with Buddhism, the Japanese of the Tokugawa period were not conscious of what part of the national culture they specially owed to the Indian religion. In short, religion in the Tokugawa age did not teach what to worship, but what to revere, and toward the latter part of the period we had less necessity to have more of a different religion. How could Christianity force her way into our country in the state such as it was, unless by the endeavour of fanatics? And the Dutch merchants of the eighteenth century were not religious fanatics at all. Through such agents, drops of the secular element in European civilisation were thrown on the cultural soil of Japan, which had been already secularised much earlier than most of the countries in the West. No spiritual consternation had been aroused, therefore, in the cultural world of our country by the intrusion of exotic factors, which only tended to augment the longing for the higher

material improvement of the people, by never satiating the desire for it. It is by this stimulus indeed that civilisation, which is prone to become stationary in an isolated country like Japan, escaped the danger of stagnation, and the process of moulding and remoulding the ever new national culture out of the element which she had possessed and that which she had added to her stock since time immemorial, went on silently under cover of the long armed peace, and at last brought forth the Revolution of the Meidji.

CHAPTER XIII

THE RESTORATION OF THE MEIDJI

THE great political change which took place in the year 1867-1868 is generally called the Restoration, in the sense that the imperial power was restored by this event. In truth, however, the prerogative of the Emperor has never been formally usurped, and none has dared impudently to declare that he had assumed the power in His Majesty's stead. All the virtual potentates, court-nobles as well as Shogun, who, each in his day, held unlimited sway over the whole country, had been accustomed to style themselves modestly vicegerents of the Emperor. On the other hand, the change was more than a mere restoration, for never in the course of our national history had the resplendent grandeur of the Imperiality reached the height in which it now actually stands. In this respect the Restoration of the Meidji can by no means be taken in the same sense as the two Restorations famous in European history, that of the Stuarts in 1660 and of the Bourbons in 1814. Renovation, perhaps, would be a more adequate term to be used here than Restoration, to designate this epoch-making event in our history. We

have reconstructed new Japan from the old materials, the origins of some of which are lost in remotest antiquity.

If, however, we should consider the range and intensity of the momentous change which was caused by the overthrow of the Tokugawa Shogunate, it is rather a revolution than a renovation. Just the same kind of disjunction which can be perceived in the transition of France from its ancient régime to the Revolution may also be noticed in the Japanese history of the transition period, which divides the pre-Meidji régime from the present status. The difference is that we accomplished in five years a counterpart, though on a much smaller scale, of what they took in France nearly a generation to conclude; a difference which may be accounted for by the absence in our country of many circumstances which helped to make the French Revolution really a great historical event. That those circumstances were lacking in our history, however, is by no means the fault of our nation. No impartial foreign historian would grudge a few words of praise to the Japanese who achieved the historic thorough transformation of national life with little or no bloodshed, when they think of the tremendous difficulties which Bismarck had to encounter in his grand task of forming the new German empire, and which even he himself could not overcome entirely.

Then how did this momentous change happen

to be achieved by the Japanese? It appeared a wonder even to the eyes of many contemporary Japanese. It surprises us, therefore, to say the least, that many foreigners not well-versed in Japanese history, however intelligent and otherwise qualified, should have believed almost without exception that the island nation had something miraculous in its immanent capacity, which had remained latent so long only from lack of opportunity to manifest itself. But to the contemplative mind, equipped at the same time with sufficient knowledge of the historical development of our country, there was nothing magical in the national achievement of the Japanese in the latter half of the nineteenth century, though it cannot be denied that the close contact with the modern civilisation of Europe at this juncture gave the most suitable opportunity to the people to try their ability nurtured by the long centuries of their history, and served efficiently to quicken the steps of national progress to a pace far more speedy than any we had ever marched before.

In other words, our national progress of these fifty years, whether it might be apt to be termed hurried steps or strides, was a thing organized by slow degrees during the long tranquil rule of the Tokugawa. As to the advancement of the general culture anterior to the Revolution of the Meidji, I have already touched on that in the previous chapter. Here I will limit myself to recapitulating the growth of the nationalistic

spirit among the people, which bore as its fruit that memorable change in the political and cultural sphere of our country.

The tranquillity restored to the country by the powerful dictatorship of Hideyoshi and Iyeyasu, and the multiplication of books, Japanese as well as Chinese, reprinted in blocks or in type, remarkably enlarged the reading circle among the people. The liberal education of warriors had been earnestly encouraged by the Shogunate, mainly for the purpose of creating intelligent and law-abiding gentlemen out of rough and adventurous fighters. A great many of the *daimyo* followed the example of the Shogunate by founding one or more schools in their own territories for the education of their own *samurai*, and in these schools moral and political lessons were given, besides training in military arts. The *samurai* were taught to read and understand Chinese classics, with the purely pragmatic purpose of enabling them to follow the inexhaustible precepts preached by the Chinese philosophers of various ages, and at the same time to qualify them to govern the people according to the political theories of Confucius, when they were put in some responsible positions in the territorial government of their lord. The textbooks used in this curriculum of education had been, of course, Chinese literature of the sort which might be called political miscellanies, that is to say, those works pertaining to morals, politics, and history. This trio was to Chinese phil-

osophers only the three different forms of the manifestation of one and the same principle, for to them politics was an enlarged application of that very principle, which when applied to personal matters made private morals, and history was only another name for the politics of the past, as many European historians still also believe. Their Japanese pupils, however, took up any one of the trio they fancied, and interlaced it with the national tradition, each according to his own taste. The metaphysical element of the Chinese moral philosophy of the Sung dynasty, the time in which Chinese philosophy reached its high flourishing scholastic stage, was thus mingled with Shintoism.

Up to that time we had Shintoism imbued with Buddhism. Now having repudiated the Indian elements out of it, we introduced in their stead the Confucian philosophy. As the philosophy introduced was that expounded by Chutse, who was an intense rigorist, the Shintoism resulting from this mixture was rather narrow and chauvinistic, though fervent enough to inspire people of education. One of the most conspicuous founders of this kind of new national cult was Ansai Yamazaki, who was born in 1619. On account of his hair-splitting doctrines, tolerating none which deviated the least from his, his disciples were always in very bitter controversy with one another, each asserting himself as the only true successor of his master, and dissension followed after dis-

sension. Many of them were so pigheaded as to make it a rule not to serve publicly in any official capacity under the Shogun nor the *diamyo,* and exerted themselves strenuously to spread their propaganda among the intelligent classes of the people.

Fuel was added to the flame of the national spirit already in a blaze by the assiduous study of the ancient literature of our country. The old Japanese literature studied and imitated during the Ashikaga period had not gone back farther than the Tempyô era. If we except some novels produced in the prime of the courtiers' régime, such as the *Genji-monogatari,* the literary works of old Japan highly prized by the courtiers and enlightened warriors of the Ashikaga were limited to the anthologies of short Japanese poems by various poets, the oldest of which was called the *Kokin-shû,* said to have been compiled in 905 A.D. under Imperial auspices. The *Mannyô-shû*, which is another collection of Japanese poems, older than those gathered into the *Kokin-shû,* and to which I referred in my former chapter as the oldest collection of all of that kind in Japan, though not entirely abandoned, could not cope with the latter in popularity, being considered as too much out of date. A few of the commentaries or interpretations of trivial topics sung or celebrated in the poems in the *Kokin-shû* had become matters of great importance in the art of Japanese versification, and had been handed from one master

to a favourite disciple as an esoteric literary secret not to be lightly divulged to the *hoi polloi.* The resuscitated national spirit of the early Tokugawa period, however, induced men of the literary circles of the time no longer to be contented with such trivialities, and stimulated them to push their researches backward into the literature still more ancient, that is to say, to launch themselves upon the difficult task of interpreting those more archaic poems contained in the *Mannyô-shû.* The foremost of these philologists was a priest by the name of Keichû, born in 1640 in the vicinity of Ôsaka. His celebrated work, the Commentaries on the Poems of the *Mannyô-shû,* is said to be the first standard hoisted in the philological study of old Japan by Japanese, a study the inauguration of which almost corresponded in time with the establishment of durable peace by the Tokugawa Shogunate. A succession of savants followed in his wake, and the most noted among them were Mabuchi Kamo and his disciple Norinaga Motoöri. It was the latter of the two who brought the study of Japanese antiquities to its highest point in the Tokugawa age.

The time of Motoöri covers the whole of the latter half of the eighteenth century, for he was born in 1730 and died in 1801 in the province of Ise. Before him the scope of researches into old Japan had been limited to the literary products of our ancient poets and novelists. Though the *Nihongi* had been talked of by the scholars of the

Ashikaga period and an edition reprinted before the advent of the house of Tokugawa, that part of the work which had been most widely read and commented on was its first volume, treating about the age of the gods and the mythical beginning of the Empire. In other words, the book had been prized not as an important historical work, but as a sacred book of Shintoism. It was Motoöri himself who first studied ancient Japan, not only from the Shintoistic point of view, but also philologically and historically. Classical literature, which became the object of his indefatigable research, was not restricted to books of mythology, but included also the ritual book of "norito," several collections of poems, and historical works. First of all, however, he concentrated his efforts upon the study of the old chronicle, *Kojiki.* He was of the opinion that the *Kojiki* was more reliable as a historical source than the *Nihongi,* as it might, according to him, be easily judged from its archaic phraseology and syntax, in contrast to the latter, the historical veracity of which must have been surely impaired by its adoption of the Chinese rhetoric. He made the most minute, critical study of the text of the *Kojiki,* phrase by phrase, and word by word. The famous *Kojiki-den,* or "The Commentaries on the *Kojiki,*" is the choicest fruit of his life-long study. In it the history, religion, manners, customs, in short, all the items concerning the civilisation of ancient Japan are expounded from the text of the chronicle it-

self, frequently corroborated by what is stated in other authentic sources. He had always in view, and laid great stress on the fact, that Japan had possessed from her beginning what was to be called her own, purely and entirely Japanese, quite apart from the culture which she introduced afterwards from abroad. It was to this unique and naïve state of things in primeval Japan taken as a whole that he applied the term Shintoism. According to him, therefore, naturalness, purity and veracity were the cardinal virtues to be taught in Shintoism, from which he thought not only Indian, but Chinese elements also should be eradicated. Thus Shintoism was stripped of its religious apparel, with which it had been invested during the long course of our history, and by his endeavours it approached again its original status as a simple moral cult with primitive rituals; but at the same time it gained immensely in strength, for it now found its main support in the nationality deeply rooted in the daily life of the ancient Japanese. By him the Japanese were reminded of their national beginning.

This philological study of ancient Japan owed much, in its early stage, to the stimulus given by the growth of historiography in the seventeenth century. This study of and the endeavour to write down the national history came of course from the political necessity of the time. As early as the fourth decade of the seventeenth century, the Shogunate is said to have ordered its court literati

to compile the history of our country from the earliest times, but it was suspended afterwards for a while. A little posterior to this, a memorable historiographical institute was initiated by Mitsukuni Tokugawa, one of the grandsons of Iyeyasu and lord of Mito. For the first time in our country, the collection of historical materials was undertaken on a grand scale. Collectors were despatched to many provinces where a rich harvest was expected. Kyoto and its vicinity were ransacked with special attention. The material thus rummaged and collected, varying from those of authentic kinds such as memoirs of ancient courtiers and court-ladies, chronicles kept in shrines and temples, and documents concerning the transactions of numberless manorial estates, down to less reliable sorts of materials such as stories, legends, tales, novels, and various other writings current in successive ages, had been criticised in their texts with tolerable scientific conscientiousness. The *Dai-Nihon-shi,* or "The History of Great Japan," which is the result of the coöperation of the historians of the Mito school engaged in researches under the auspices of Mitsukuni and his successors, consists of two hundred and thirty one volumes, and has taken two centuries and a half for its completion, the last volume having been published in 1906. In its form the grand history is an imitation of the *Shih-chi* by Ssumachien of the Han dynasty, the whole system being divided into the three sections of the annals

of the emperors, biographers of noted personages, and miscellanies, with various tables. It is by no means a complete history of Japan, for it comes down only to 1392, the year in which the two rival houses of the Imperial family were united and put an end to the long civil war. Moreover, it was only in the middle of the nineteenth century, that the first two sections were put into print, though as manuscripts those parts had been finished much earlier. It is not, therefore, on account of the publication of the history, but of the researches themselves and their by-products, that the historiography of the Mito school greatly influenced the rise of the nationalistic spirit of the Japanese. The long arduous labours of these historians were consummated in expounding the doctrine that the Japanese nation had something unique in its civilisation which was worthy to be guarded carefully and fostered, and that the only bond which could unite the nation spiritually was fidelity towards its common centre, the Emperor, whose family had continued to reign over the country since time immemorial. The history is often criticised as being too pragmatic, narrow, and subjective, therefore not scientific. If we consider, however, that even in those countries in the West where the study of history is boasted of as having reached a high stage of scientific investigation, most of the historians, if not the histories they have written, have been also decidedly pragmatic, so that few of them can be

called perfectly objective, then we should not much blame the historians and the history of the Mito school. That the school was entirely free from any sort of superstition must also be mentioned as one of its chief merits. This may be attributed to the rationalistic influence of the doctrine of Chutse, and the fact that the history was written in orthodox Chinese shows how these historiographers were imbued with Chinese ideas. It might be said, however, to their credit that the task was first undertaken in an age in which the literary language of our country had not yet become entirely independent of Chinese, and that, notwithstanding the adoption of that language, in committing the result of their researches to writing they had never fallen into the self-deception which might come from sinicomania. Since the inception of this ever-memorable historiographical undertaking, the town of Mito had continued to be the hearth of nationalism and patriotism, and thinkers devoted to these ideas had been very glad to make their pilgrimage from all parts of Japan to the centre of the pure Japanese culture, and to converse with these historians of the noted institution. It was indeed the early groups of these historians who first stirred up the nationalistic spirit in the later seventeenth century, and their successors it was who accelerated and most strongly reinforced the national movement just before the Revolution. No school of learning in Japan had even been so powerful and effective as

that of Mito in influencing and leading the spirit of the nation.

The torch, however, which had succeeded in giving blissful light to illumine the whole nation, burned at last the torch-bearer himself with its blazing flame. Not to mention that the finances of the territorial lord had been miserably drained by this undertaking, which is said to have swallowed up about one-third of the whole revenue of the territory, and therefore proved too heavy a burden for the small income of the lord. Narrow-mindedness, which is the necessary consequence of rigorism, tended to nurture an implacable party spirit among the *samurai* of the territory educated in this principle. Internal strife thus ensued which implicated not only the whole *samurai* but people of all classes. In short, the territory was divided against itself. Both parties appealed to arms at last, and fought against each other, until both had to lie down quite exhausted. So the culture which the historians and the *samurai* of Mito raised to a high pitch proved to be disastrous to their own welfare, yet the good which it did to the country at large should remain as a glory to those who sacrificed themselves for what they regarded as their ideal.

We see now that several forces had coöperated in accomplishing the final unity and consolidation of the nation. In giving the finishing touch, however, to the task of many centuries, the enigmatic relations between the Emperor and the

Shogun had necessarily to be cleared. Though the Shogunate had continued to transact the state affairs as if he had been the sole regent of the Emperor, the legal status of the former had never been created by any ordinance issued by the latter. No emperor had ever formally confided his political prerogative to the Shogun. The basis on which the jurisdictional power of the Shogun had rested was nothing but the *fait accompli* connived at and acquiesced in by the Emperor. If the prestige of the Emperor, therefore, which had once fallen into decadence, should be revived, the position of the Shogun was sure to become untenable. The historians of the Mito school tried their best to make the Emperor the nucleus of the national consolidation. Their political theory had been strongly influenced by the legitimism entertained by the historians of the Sung dynasty, and this principle of legitimacy, when applied to the history of Japan, must have led only to the conclusion that the only legitimate and therefore actual sovereign of the country could be none other than the Emperor himself. Needless to say, such an argument was injurious to the political interests of the Shogunate, so that it seems very strange that the theory had been upheld and loudly heralded by these historians who were under the protection of the lord of Mito, the descendant of a scion of Iyeyasu. It was not, of course, the intention of the hereditary lords of Mito and their historians to undermine the struc-

ture of the Shogunate from its foundation. Having been, however, too sharp and fervent in their argument, they had been unable to rein themselves in, before the interests of the Shogunate were thereby jeopardised, and as a logical consequence they brought unconsciously to a terrible catastrophe the whole edifice of the military régime, in which alone they could find a reason for their existence.

The spirit of the nation had thus been under the increasing notion that the coexistence of the sovereign Emperor with the omnipotent Shogunate would be ultimately impossible, and such a trend of thought had been highly welcomed in those parts of Japan where militarism had the least hold. So far, however, it had been the more logical pursuance of a political ideal, and if no opportunity had presented itself to these idealists to put their theory into execution, it would have remained for long the idle vapouring of romantic and irresponsible politicians. That Japan was saved from this inaction, and that the virile movement in favour of the revival of the imperial prestige was at last undertaken, must be attributed to the shock and stimulus which came from without, that is to say, to the coercion on the part of the Western nations to open to them our country, which had been so long secluded from the rest of the world.

Since the so-called "closing of the country" the Japanese had enjoyed a peaceful national life, un-

disturbed for more than one century and a half, and during this period of long tranquillity Japan had been able to prepare herself for the hardships which she was about to encounter, by replenishing her national culture and transforming it so as to be able to take in as much of the Western civilisation as she was in need of, without fear of thereby endangering her own national existence. But at the end of the eighteenth century the insistent knocking of foreigners at the door began to be heard, first at the back-door of the Island Empire. It was only the Russians who, having already annexed the vast tract of Siberia, were now ready to make a jump forward, and loitered on the northern coast of our Hokkaidô, called the island of Yezo at that time. This was the beginning of new national troubles. It was not, however, the same kind of foreign troubles as those which we had tried and succeeded in getting rid of in the early days of the Shogunate. There was no fear now of suffering from the religious intrigues of foreign missionaries. The danger, if there were any, was purely of a political nature.

Needless to say, the nation had had no voice in determining the Shogunate's policy of "shutting up the country", and had not understood well the merit or demerit of the policy itself, but having been accustomed for a long time to the isolated national existence, and puffed up not a little into self-conceit by the growth of the nationalistic spirit, they were unconsciously induced to believe

that the status they were in must be the only normal condition of the country. The people at large, though relieved of the overdue influence of China, yet had a very scanty knowledge of the condition in which Europe and America were at that time, and did not wish, in the least, to be deranged by the intrusion, however well-meant, of any foreigner into their quite abode, in spite of the utter impossibility of continuing such a national life *ad infinitum* in the face of the changed circumstances of the world, caused by the eastward expansion of various European nations, and by the rise of a new power on the American continent, the power which had just acquired access to the shore of the Pacific. Those who were then at the helm of state, that is to say, the statesmen of the Shogunate, shared nearly the same opinion with the nation at large. Not only for the national welfare, but in the interests of the Shogunate itself, they thought it best to keep up the *status quo* as long as possible. Unfortunately, the foreigners who now knocked at our doors were not unarmed like those who had come two centuries before, neither were they so humble and docile as the Dutchmen at Deshima were accustomed to be. In order to keep them off in spite of their importunate wish to the contrary, we had to provide for emergencies. So the Shogunate tried to make military preparations, to defend the country in case of necessity and drive away the intruders by force of arms. The more,

however, the Shogunate tried to arm the nation against the foreigners, the more difficult it found the task it had in view. As the result of the long enjoyment of peace, the people had become inured to ease and luxury, and had lost much of their martial spirit, of which they had been exceedingly proud as their characteristic attribute. Moreover, the country having been parcelled out into nearly three hundred territories, it was very hard for the Shogunate to mobilise the warriors of the whole empire at its sole command. On the other hand, the material progress of the Western nations, achieved during the time of our seclusion, had been really astonishing. The difficulty of coping with them now became far greater for us than it had been at the end of the sixteenth century. Notwithstanding these overwhelming difficulties, the Shogunate persisted in its endeavour to strengthen the national defences. The martial spirit of the nation was gradually reawakened, but new internal difficulties were created by thus mobilising the nation, divided as it was into motley groups. The martial spirit which the Shogunate aroused was turned against itself, and the Shogunate proved unable to steer through the crisis at last.

At first the opinion of the educated class of the nation was conflicting, but a few were eager to see the necessary overthrow of the régime of the Shogun. The great part gradually concurred in denouncing the incapacity of the Shogunate to

fulfil by itself the task which it was called upon to accomplish. Still many were in favour of supporting the Shogunate in order to enable it to carry through its traditional policy of seclusion. Some advocated even the closer union of the Shogunate with the Imperial court, which was now beginning to become again the influential political centre of the nation in opposition to the power at Yedo, so that there might have been a fear of the two powers coming into collision. The conclusion, however, of the treaty with the United States in 1858, and subsequently with other powers, bitterly disappointed these sincere friends of the Shogunate and emboldened its adversaries. Hitherto those who had diametrically opposed the Shogunate were men who had never been in any position politically responsible. In other words, they were doctrinaires, and not men of action, so that there could be no serious danger to the Shogunate so long as they contented themselves only with arguing about national affairs in highflown language. But the disappointment which the Shogunate gave to its friends, turned them into sympathisers with the radical opponents. The danger was thus shifted from foreign relations to the serious internal question, whether the Shogunate should be allowed to exist any longer or not. Those who wished for the revival of the imperial prestige or the overthrow of the existing régime, whatever form the revolution might take, wielded as their forcible weapon to attack the Shogunate the de-

nunciation that the sacred Land of the Gods had been opened to the sacrilegious tread of hairy barbarians, and their slogan was so persuasive that it led the imperial court at Kyoto to issue an order urging the Shogunate to repudiate the already concluded treaties and to return to the time-honoured seclusion policy, a task of utter impossibility. To this august command from Kyoto, the Shogunate could but respond very obsequiously, being intimidated somewhat by the loud clamour of these conservative patriots. Or it may be said that the military government succumbed to the combined force of the court-nobles and the territorial politicians. The marriage of the fourteenth Shogun to one of the sisters of the Emperor Kômei, in the year 1861, though concluded for the sake of the rapprochement of the Imperial court and the Shogunate, did not prove so serviceable in saving the tottering edifice of the Tokugawa régime as had been expected. Finding that the power and the resources of the Shogunate were inadequate to perform the duty which it had pledged itself to accomplish, Yoshihisa Tokugawa, the fifteenth and last of the Shogun, resigned all the power he had, political as well as military, into the hands of the Emperor Meidji, who had just succeeded his father the Emperor Kômei. This happened in November of the year 1867. A little previous to this the proposition of the Shogunate to open the port of Hyogo, now Kobe, to foreign trade was agreed to by the Em

peror, a fact which proves how difficult it was to maintain the out-of-date seclusion-policy. From this it can be seen that the Shogunate of the Tokugawa fell, after the lapse of two hundred sixty four years from its beginning, not from lack of foresight on the part of their statesmen, but solely from loss of prestige.

The prestige of the Shogunate was lost, simply because the system, such as it was, had become anachronistic in the face of the altered conditions of the country, which had been steadily progressing during these centuries. In other words, the Tokugawa Shogunate had been undermining itself for a long time by having courageously undertaken the honourable task which it was destined to perform in our national history, and it collapsed just in time when it had accomplished its mission. The fall of the Shogunate, therefore, must be said to have taken place very opportunely. The overthrow of the Shogunate, however, did not mean the mere downfall of the House of the Tokugawa; but it was the final collapse of the military régime, which had actually ruled Japan for nearly seven centuries, and the demolition of such a grand and elaborate historical edifice as the Shogunate could not be expected to be carried out without a catastrophe. That catastrophe came in the form of a civil war, which raged over the country for more than a year.

After the resignation of the last of the Shogun, the new government was instantly set up at Ky-

oto, at the head of which an imperial prince was placed, who had to control all the state business in the name of the Emperor. The councillors under him were chosen not only from court-nobles, but also from the able *samurai* who belonged to the party antagonistic to the Shogunate. This exasperated the partisans of the last Shogunate. Though the ex-Shogun had renounced his hereditary rights as the actual ruler of Japan, he still remained a *daimyo* even after his resignation, and as a *daimyo* he was the most powerful of all, for he had a far greater number of the *samurai* under him in his *hatamoto* than any other of his colleagues. Besides, he had many sympathisers among the *daimyo*. These vassals and friends of the ex-Shogun were discontented at the turn which the course of events had taken, and wished at least to rescue him from a further decrease of his influence. Induced at last by these followers to try his fortune, the ex-Shogun asked for an imperial audience, which was refused. Then he attempted to force his entrance into the city of Kyoto, escorted by his own guards and the forces of the friendly *daimyo,* and was met by the Imperialist army, composed of the forces of the lords of Satsuma, Nagato, Tosa, Hizen, and other *daimyo,* the greater part of whom had their territories in the western provinces of Japan. At the end of January, 1868, the two opposing armies came into collision at Fushimi and Toba, villages in the southern suburb of the old metropolis, and

the forces of the ex-Shogun gave way. Yoshihisa hurriedly retreated to Ôsaka with his staff, and thence by sea to Yedo, whither the imperial army pursued him by the land-route.

At Yedo some of the vassals of the Tokugawa could not make up their minds to submit complacently to the unavoidable lot of their suzerain and of themselves, and insisted on making their last stand against the approaching Imperialists by defending the city. But the wiser counsel prevailed, and the castle was surrendered to the Imperialists without bloodshed at the end of April. A handful of desperate *samurai,* who fortified themselves in the precincts of the Temple of Uyeno, the site of the present metropolitan park, was easily subdued by the Imperialists. The ex-Shogun, who had been interned at Mito on account of his having fought against the Imperialists, was released soon afterwards. By an Imperial grace, a member of a lateral branch of the Tokugawa was ordered to succeed the ex-Shogun as *daimyo,* and made the hereditary lord of Suruga. The first phase of the Revolution thus came to an end.

The country, however, which had once been set astir could not be pacified so easily. The next to be chastised was the lord of Aidzu, a *daimyo* who, remaining faithful to the Shogunate to the last, fought desperately in the battle of Fushimi and Toba, and retired to his territory in northern Japan after his defeat. Though he found supporters among the *daimyo* of the neighboring ter-

ritories, the forces of the Imperialists were in the meanwhile immensely reinforced, for the *diamyo* of middle Japan, who had hitherto been neutral, now joined their colleagues of the south. The war began anew in the middle of June in the northern part of Honto. The combined forces of the northern *diamyo* had to fight against fearful odds, and were successively defeated. The castle of Aidzu was closely invested, and capitulated at the beginning of November. The supporters of the lord of Aidzu also surrendered one after another to the Imperialists. It was soon after this that the adoption of the name of Meidji, as the designation of the opening era, was promulgated at Kyoto.

The last chivalrous feat in behalf of the Shogun was performed by the fleet which belonged to the former Shogunate. Before the Revolution the Shogunate had kept a fleet consisting of eight ships, commanded by Admiral Yenomoto, who had received his naval education in Holland. This was the only navy worthy of its name in Japan at that time. After the capitulation of Yedo the Imperial Government ordered half of the men-of-war belonging to the fleet to be given up to itself, allowing the rest to be kept in the hands of the Tokugawa. The admiral was, however, too sorrowful to part with his ships, so that a little before the capitulation of Aidzu, he sailed out with all his fleet from the harbour of Yedo, and occupied Hakodate, a port at the southern end

of the island of Yezo. But the forces he was able to land were no match for the victorious Imperialists, who became now quite free in all other quarters. The harbour of Hakodate was soon blockaded, and the Pentagon Fortress was besieged and taken. In June of the following year the whole island of Yezo was subdued, and the new name of Hokkaidô was given to it.

With the surrender of Hakodate the military history of the Revolution of the Meidji came to its close, but the political transformation was not yet consummated. What was already accomplished concerned only the elimination of the Shogun from the political system of the country and the establishment of the direct rule of the Emperor over the *daimyo*. The latter, not reduced in number and undiminished in extent of territories, except a few who had forfeited the whole or a part of their territories by their resistance to the imperial order, still continued to hold their hereditary rights over their land and people as in the time of the Tokugawa. In short, the national question had only been partially solved, and there remained much to be done before the attainment of the final goal, the complete reconstruction of the whole empire. Various important changes necessary for it were put into pracice during the next four years.

In the year 1868, the city of Yedo changed its name to Tokyo, which means the eastern capital, and was made henceforth the constant residence

of the Emperor instead of Kyoto. This was the beginning of the new era. In July 1869, the feudal rights of the *daimyo* over their territories and people were abolished, after the voluntary renunciation of their privileges on the part of the latter, who now became hereditary governors salaried according to the income of each respective territory. If the Revolution had stopped short at this, then the prestige of the territorial lords might have still remained almost intact, for they still resided in the same territories which they had owned as *daimyo,* and they had still under them standing forces, consisting of their former *samurai.* The juridical transformation of what they owned as their private property into objects of their public jurisdiction was a change of too delicate a nature to manifest to the multitude of the people a political aspect totally different from that of the time of the Shogunate. It needed three years more to sweep away all these feudal shackles. In August of the year 1871 the division of the empire into territories was replaced by the division into prefectures, which were far less in number than the territories of the *daimyo,* the jurisdiction of the hereditary governors was suspended, and to each of the prefectures a new governor was appointed. The allowances of the *samurai,* which had still been hereditary, were also suspended, and their compensation was rendered in form of a bond, with gradations according to their former income. The new decimal

monetary system was adopted. The Gregorian calendar was adopted. The military service which had been the exclusive calling of the *samurai* class was now extended to people of all classes. The conscription system was introduced after the examples of the Western countries, and this reform naturally led to the loss of the privileges of the *samurai*. All people were now made equal before the law. Japan was at last clothed in quite modern attire.

CHAPTER XIV

EPILOGUE

JAPAN of the past fifty years since the Revolution of the Meidji may be said to have been in a transition period, although we do not know when nor how she will settle down after all. As a transition period in the history of any country is generally its most eventful epoch, so our last half century has been the busiest time the nation has ever experienced. Not only that. We were ushered into the wide world, just at the time when the world itself began to have its busiest time also. The opening of the country at such a juncture may be compared to a man in deep slumber, who is aroused suddenly in the dazzling daylight of noon. Moreover, Japan has had another and not less important business to attend to, that is to say, she had to trim herself, and complete her internal reconstruction, a task which may not perhaps come to its completion for a long time to come. Excitation must be the natural outcome to anybody placed in such a position. Japan has over-worked indeed, and is yet working very hard. She has achieved not a little already, and is still struggling to achieve more. If we would try to

describe the history of Japan during these fifty years, we should have more to tell than the history of the preceding twenty centuries. That is not, however, possible in the scope of this small volume. Another reason why we need not expatiate on this period of our national history is because it is comparatively better known to foreigners than the history of old Japan, though we are not sure that it is not really misunderstood. The root, however, of the misapprehension of Japan of the Meidji era lies deep in the misapprehension of the history of her past, for one who can understand rightly Japan of the past, may not err much in comprehending Japan of the present. I will not, therefore, describe in detail the contemporary history of Japan, but will content myself by giving merely a cursory view of it.

It was none but the *samurai,* the mainstay of feudal Japan, who brought about the momentous change of the Meidji, and it was the *samurai* of the lower class, who acted the chief part in the Revolution. The savants, however they might have proved useful in fanning the nationalistic spirit among the people, were after all not men of action. Only the *samurai,* when permeated with this spirit, could effect such a grand political change. There may be no doubt that the *samurai* undertook the task for the sake of the national welfare, and most of all not to restore the already rotten régime which had once existed before the advent of the Kamakura Shogunate. But

this evident truth was known neither to the court-nobles, who dreamt only of seeing their past glory recovered, nor to those idealists of ultra-conservative trend, who sincerely believed that the history of nearly twelve centuries might be simply ignored and the golden days of the Nara period be called back into life once more. The latter strongly urged the personal government of the Emperor and the restoration of the worship of the national gods to its ancient glory, while the former strove to recover the reins of government into their own hands. It was the result of their compromise, that the political organisation of the Taïhô era was formally revived, though with not a few indispensable modifications. Think of the statute of eleven hundred seventy years before recalled to reality again, and of a country, governed by a such a petrified statute, entering the concourse of the nations of the world in the nineteenth century. How comical it would have been if such a retrogression had been allowed to proceed even for a generation? The first to be disappointed were the court-nobles. The expectation of the ultra-conservatives was also far from being fulfilled. The country was in urgent need of a new legislation conformable to the new state of things, and the restored statute was soon found to be utterly inadequate to serve the purpose. The quixotic movement of the bigoted Shintoists to persecute Buddhism, which led to the lamentable demolition of many Buddhist sculptures and

buildings of high artistic merit, was to subside as soon as it was started, for it was now the age of complete religious toleration, which was extended even to Christianity soon afterwards.

The most extravagant expectation of the ultra-conservatives was thus frustrated, but the conservative spirit in the nation, which was by no means to be swept away at all found its devotees among the class of the *samurai.* Though they were the real makers of the Revolution, yet the loss of their privileges and material interests which it entailed, touched them sorely. A very small fraction of them served the new government as officials and soldiers of high and low rank, and could enjoy life much more comfortably than they did in the pre-Meidji days. The greater part of the *samurai,* however, were obliged to betake themselves to some of the callings which they were accustomed to look down upon with disdain, for if they did not work, the compensation which they received from the government did not suffice to sustain them for long. Some of them preferred to become farmers, and those who persisted in that line generally fared well. Many others turned themselves into merchants, and mostly failed; being accustomed to the simplicities of the life and the code of soldiers, and utterly unversed in the complexities of the code commercial, and the trickeries of the life merchants; and the small capital obtained by selling their compensation-bonds was soon squandered.

What wonder if they began to regret and whine for better days of the past? Discontentment became rampant among them; but the inducement to its disruption was provided by the diplomatic tension with Korea.

I have no space here to dwell upon the intricate history of the differences between Korea and our country in the later seventies of the nineteenth century. Suffice it to say that the militaristic party in and out of the government favoured the war with Korea, while the opposing party was against it, considering it injurious to sound national progress, especially at a time when it was an immediate necessity for the welfare of the country to devote all its resources to internal reconstruction. The war party with Takamori Saigô at its head seceded from the government. Saigô had been a great figure since the Revolution, as the representative *samurai* of the Satsuma, and had a great many worshippers, so that even after his retirement his influence over the territory of Satsuma was immense. At last he was forced by his adorers, whose ill-feeling against the government now knew no bounds, to take up arms in order to purge the government, which seemed to them too effeminate and too radical. Not only the warlike and conservative *samurai* of Satsuma, but all the *samurai* in the other provinces of Kyushû, who sympathised with them, rose up and joined them. Siege was laid by them to

the castle of Kumamoto, the site of regimental barracks.

So far they had been successful, but owing to insufficiency of ammunition and provisions, they could not force their way much farther. Moreover, the Imperial Army recently organised, recruited mostly from the common people by the conscription system, proved very efficient, owing to the use of Snider rifles, although at first the new soldiers had been despised by the insurgents on account of their low origin. The siege of Kumamoto was at last raised; the remnant of the defeated forces of Saigô retired to a valley near the town of Kagoshima; Saigô committed suicide; and the civil war ended in the victory of the government in September 1877, seven months after its outburst.

This civil war is an epoch-making event in the history of the Meidji era, in the sense that it was a death blow to the last and powerful remnant force of feudalism, the influence of the *samurai*. Though the *samurai*-soldiers who fought on the side of Saigô were very few in number compared with the host of the *samurai* within the whole empire, and though not a few *samurai*-soldiers fought also on the opposite side, still it was clear that the insurgents represented the interests of the *samurai* as a class better than the governmental army, and the defeat of the former had, on the prestige of the class, an effect quite similar to that which was produced in Europe of the

later Middle Ages by the use of firearms and the organisation of the standing army, and significantly reduced the traditional influence of knights on horseback. It is for this reason that the democratisation of the nation markedly set in after the civil war, and with it the territorial particularism, which had been weakened by the Revolution, has been rapidly dying away. Political parties of various shades began to be formed. The works of Montesquieu and Rousseau were translated into Japanese, and widely read with avidity. The cry for a representative government became a national demand. Against the hesitating government riots were raised here and there. To sum up the history of the second decade of the Meidji era, we see that it strikingly resembles French history in the first half of the nineteenth century. The rise of the influence of the new-born bourgeois class in modern Japan may be said to have dated from this epoch. Europeanisation in manners and customs became more and more striking year by year.

What is unique in our modern history is that, parallel with the growth of the democratic tendency in the nation, the imperial prestige effected a remarkable increase. This seemingly contradictory phenomenon may be explained easily by considering how our present notion of fidelity to the Emperor has evolved. The divine authority of the Emperor did not suffer any remarkable change after his personal régime ceased, though

his political prestige had been eclipsed by the assumption of power by the Fujiwara nobles. Even after the establishment of the Shogunate, nobody in Japan had ever though it possible that the Emperor could be placed in rank equal to or under a Shogun or any other sort of dictator, however virtually powerful he might have been. Through all political vicissitudes the Emperor has remained always the noblest personage in Japan, and in this sense he has been the focus toward which the heart of the whole nation turned.

The relation of the Emperor to the people at large, during these periods of eclipse, was indirect. Between them intervened the Shogun and the *daimyo* as actual immediate rulers, so that fidelity to the Emperor had been spoken of only academically, and their fidelity, in a concrete sense, had been solely centered in their immediate master, who reciprocated it by the protection he extended directly over them. Thus fidelity on the one hand and protection on the other hand had been conditioned by each other, and because the bond was naturally an essential link of the military régime, it was strengthened by its being handed down from generation to generation. In short, the fidelity of the Japanese may be said to be a product of the miliary régime, and owes its growth to the hereditary relation of vassalage. As all the ideals and virtues cherished among the *samurai* class used to be considered by plebeians as worthy of imitation, if practicable in their own

circles, fidelity was also understood by them in the same sense as among the military circles, that is to say, as a soldierly virtue in a subordinate toward his superior. So it grew to be more disciplinary, self-sacrificing and devotional, than in the times before the military régime. This condition of the national morals had continued to the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate, with occasional relaxations, of course. But now that the Shogunate and the *daimyo* were eliminated from the political system, the foci toward which the fidelity of the people had been turned ceased to exist, and the fidelity remained, as it were, to be a cherished virtue of the nation though without a goal. It sought for a new focus, looked up one stage higher than the Shogun, and was glad to make the Emperor the object of its fervent devotion. Soon it developed almost into a passion, because the nation became more and more conscious of the necessity of a well-centred national consolidation, and it could find nowhere else a centre more fit for it than the Emperor. His prestige could increase in this way *pari passu* with the growth of the democratic spirit in the nation. It is not, therefore, a mere traditional preponderance, but an authority having its foundation in modern civilisation.

It cannot be denied, however, that history clothes our imperial house with special grandeur, which might not be sought in the case of any royal family newly come to power, and if conservatism

would have a firm stand in Japan, it must be the conservatism which sprang from this historical relation of the people to the Emperor. This explains the sudden rise of the conservative spirit, which at once changed the aspect of the country at the end of the second decade of the Meidji era. It happened just at the time when the current of Europeanisation was at its height and the realisation of the hope of the progressives, the promulgation of the Constitution and the inauguration of representative government, drew very near.

In February 1889 the Constitution long craved for was at last granted, and by virtue of it the first Imperial Diet was opened the next year. This adoption of the representative system of government by Japan used to be often cited as a rare example of the wonderful progress of a nation not European, and all our subsequent national achievements have been ascribed by foreigners to this radical change of constitution. Every good and every evil, however, which the system is said to possess, has been fully manifested in this country. We have since been continually endeavouring to train and accustom ourselves to the new régime, but our experience in modern party government is still very meagre, and it will take a long time to see all classes of the people appropriately interested in national politics, which is a requisite condition to reaping the benefit of constitutional government to the utmost. At present we have no reason to regret, on the contrary much

reason to rejoice at, the introduction of the system.

After the constitution came many organic laws, the civil and penal code, and so forth, in order of proclamation. This completion of the apparatus necessary to the existence of the modern state improved in no small measure the position of our country in the eyes of attentive foreigners. What, however, contributed most of all to the abrogation of the rights of extraterritoriality enjoyed by foreigners on Japanese soil, the object of bitter complaint and pining on the part of patriots, was the victory won by our army in the war against China.

Before the outbreak of the Sinico-Japanese war, China had long been regarded not only by Western nations, but by the Japanese themselves, as far above our country in national strength, not to speak of the superiority of wealth as well as of civilisation in general. Though the victory of the expeditionary troops sent by Hideyoshi over the Chinese reinforcements despatched by the Emperor of the Ming to succour the invaded Koreans was sufficient to wipe off the military humiliation which our army had suffered on the peninsula nine hundred years before, and had much to do in enhancing the national self-confidence against the Chinese, the renewed imitation of her civilisation during the Tokugawa Shogunate turned the scale again in favour of China even to the eyes of the Japanese intelligents, and we had been constantly overawed by the influence of the big continental neighbour. So that the formal annexa-

tion of the Loochoo Islands in the first decade of the Meirji era against the opposing Chinese claim was considered to be a great diplomatic victory of the new government. The failure of the French expedition added also to the credit of the unfathomable force of the Celestial Empire. The grand Chinese fleet which visited our ports in the year previous to the war was thought to be more than our match, and made us feel a little disquieted. Contrary to our anticipation, however, battle after battle ended in our victory in the war of 1894-1895, and Korea was freed from Chinese hegemony by the treaty of Shimonoseki.

Though some of the important articles of the same treaty were made useless by the intervention of the three Western powers, the war proved on the whole very beneficial to our country. The growth of the consciousness of the national strength emboldened the people to develop their activity in all directions. Several new industries began to flourish. The national wealth increased remarkably so as to enable the government to adopt a monometallic currency in gold. Education, high as well as low, was encouraged by the increase of various new schools and by the strengthening of their staffs. We laboured very hard for the ten following years, and then the Russo-Japanese war took place.

It was indeed fortunate that we could win after all in the war in which we put our national destiny at stake. Not only in this war with Russia,

but in that with China a decade before, we had been by no means sure of victory, when we decided to enter into them. It is such a war generally that proves salutary to the victorious party, when, after having been fought with difficulty, it ends in a way better than had been anticipated. It was so in the war of 1894-1895, and was not otherwise in that waged ten years later. These military successes, needless to say, increased still more the splendour of the imperial prerogative already magnificently revived. At the same time they countenanced the growth of conservatism. The impetus, however, which these wars gave to the general activity of the nation necessitated the people betaking themselves to the study and imitation of Western civilisation. And this Europeanisation, direct or through America, tended to make the nation more and more progressive. Thus conservatism in recent Japan has been marching hand in hand with liberalism, nay, even with radicalism, each alternately outweighing the other. This is why present Japan has appeared to be lacking in stability, especially in the eyes of foreign observers.

The years immediately succeeding the Russo-Japanese war formed the culminating period of the glorious era of Meidji, and also a turning-point of the national history. Up to that time foreign nations had been lavishing their kindness in the education of the novice nation, who seemed to them to be yet in her teens on account of hav-

ing just entered into the concert of the world as a passive hearer. They did not know what would become of Japan, brought up and instructed in this way. In military affairs the English were our first masters, then came the French and the German. In the navy, the Dutch followed by the English were our instructors. In the sphere of legislation, the first advisers were the French, to whom the Germans succeeded. The latter also taught us their science of medicine, which to study in Japan the German language has become the first requisite. Besides what has been enumerated above, knowledge of all branches of industries, arts, and sciences has been introduced into our country in the highly advanced stage of the brilliant century. Who would have dreamt, however, of the victory of the Japanese over the Russians in January of 1904? In the war, it is true, a great many foreigners sympathised with the cause of the Japanese, simply because all bystanders are unconsciously wont to take the side of the weaker. The fall of Port Arthur and the annihilation of the Russian navy on the Sea of Japan were beyond all expectation. They now began to think that they might be also taken unawares by us, as they thought the Russians were, forgetting that they had ignored to study the Japanese. They rather repented that they had underestimated the real Japanese unduly, and thereby they have fallen into the error of overestimation. We do not think that a sheer victory on a

battlefield can in any case be taken as a measure of the progress of civilisation in the victor. Moreover, in what field could we have been able to beat any European nation except in battle, if we could beat her at all? Almost all of our cultural factors we have borrowed from foreign countries, and therefore they are of later introduction, so that they could not be easily brought by our imitation, however adroit it might be, to a stage nearly so high as they had reached in their original homes. But as to the art of fighting only, we have come to practise it since the old times, and during the successive Shogunates it had been the calling most honoured and followed by us at the expense of other acquirements. In short, it was the speciality of old Japan, so that our success in arms could not testify to the sudden jump in other branches of our civilisation. Those foreigners, however, who had been accustomed to judge us from afar, looked only at the scientific and mechanical side of modern war, of which we had availed ourselves, and surmised that if we could stand excellently the test in this department, we must certainly have surpassed what they had expected of us in all respects. This surmise, which they felt not very agreeably, they flatly imputed to our dissimulation and feigning, and branded them as our national vices, instead of attributing the miscalculation to their self-deception and ignorance as regards things Japanese. On the contrary, we have had never the least intention to de-

ceive any foreigner in the estimation of the merit of what we have achieved. Would it not be ridiculously absurd to assume the existence of such a tendency in any living nation in the world?

We have been thus overestimated and at the same time begun to be somewhat disliked by those short-sighted observers in foreign countries after our successful war with Russia. The pet nation of the whole world of yesterday was turned suddenly into the most suspected and dangerous nation of to-day! There have been many missionaries who had personal experience of our country, owing to their residence here for years, professing that they have tried their utmost to plead our cause. Unfortunately, their defence of us has not availed much, for a great part of them are used to depict us as a nation still evolving. Evolving they say, for our recent national progress is too evident a fact to be refuted, and they wish to ascribe it to their fruitful endeavours. Evolving, they say repeatedly, for they are fain to show that there is still remaining in Japan a wide field reserved for them to work, lest their *raison d'être* in this country should otherwise be lost forever. In fact, we are now far enough advanced as a nation as not to require the tutelage of the missionaries of recent times.

I regret that we have among us a certain number of typical braggarts, who unfortunately abound in every country, and their shameless bluffing has often caused astonishment to unpre-

judiced observers in foreign countries. Nevertheless, we as a nation are neither far better nor far worse than any other in the world. To remain as a petrified state, with plenty of well-preserved relics of all ages, is what we cannot bear for our country. We know well that a nation which produces sight-seers must be incomparably happier and more praiseworthy than that which furnishes quaint objects for show to please those sight-seers. If there be any other nation that wishes to make its home a peepshow for others, let it do so. That is not our business. What we aspire to earnestly as our national ideal is to make our country able to stand shoulder to shoulder with the senior Western nations in contributing to the advance and welfare of world civilisation. We shall proceed toward this goal, however fluctuating foreign opinion about us may be for years or ages to come.

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